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INDIA'S NATIONAL PAN-GENRE MUSIC MAGAZINE

the Score magazine

BAND OF THE MONTH:

Perfect Strangers

is perfectly charming

QUIRKS & QUERIES:

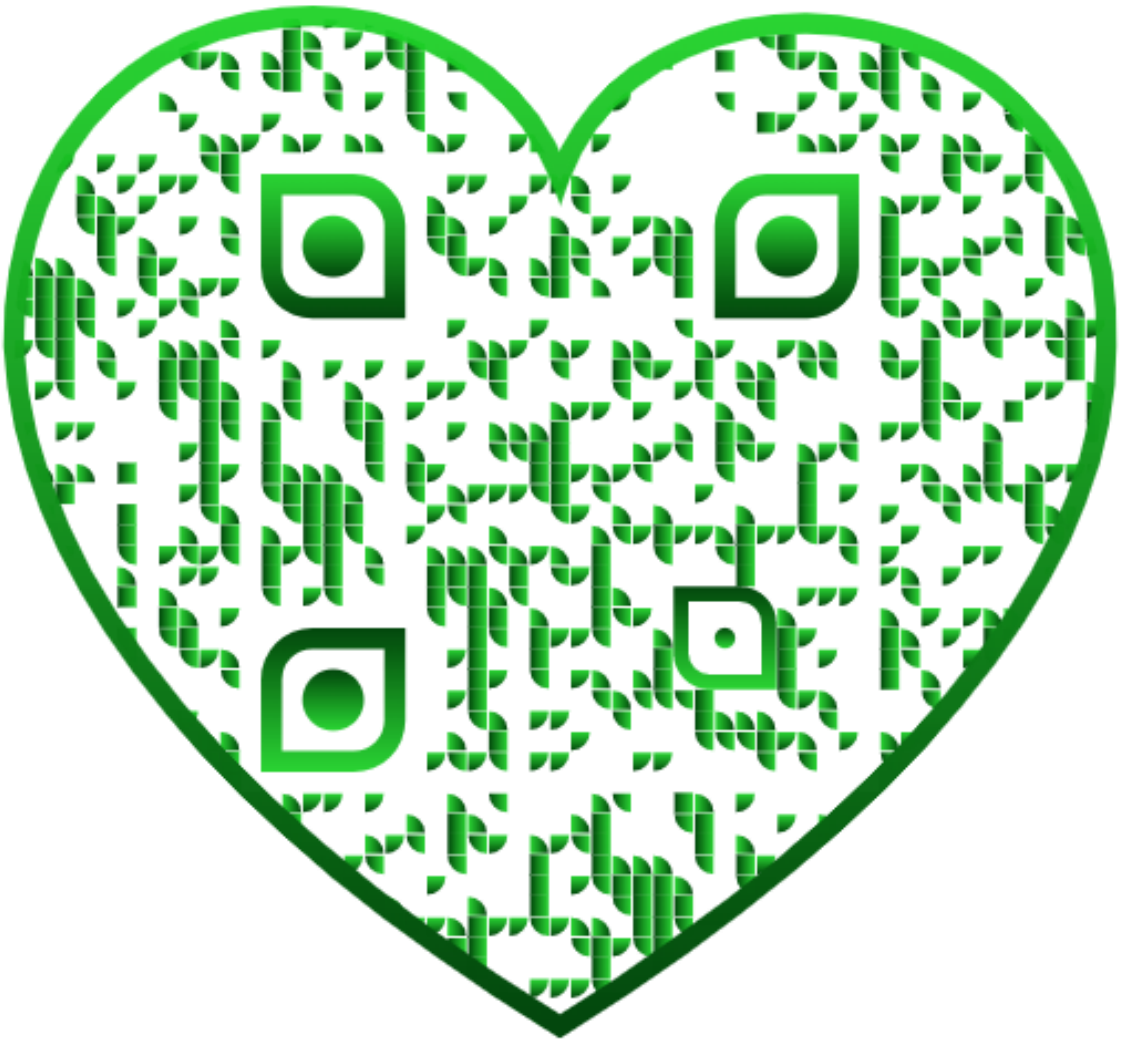
Padma Shankar

and her string-drawn soul

RETURN TO DESI SHORES:

BRYAN ADAMS

CALLS ON INDIA



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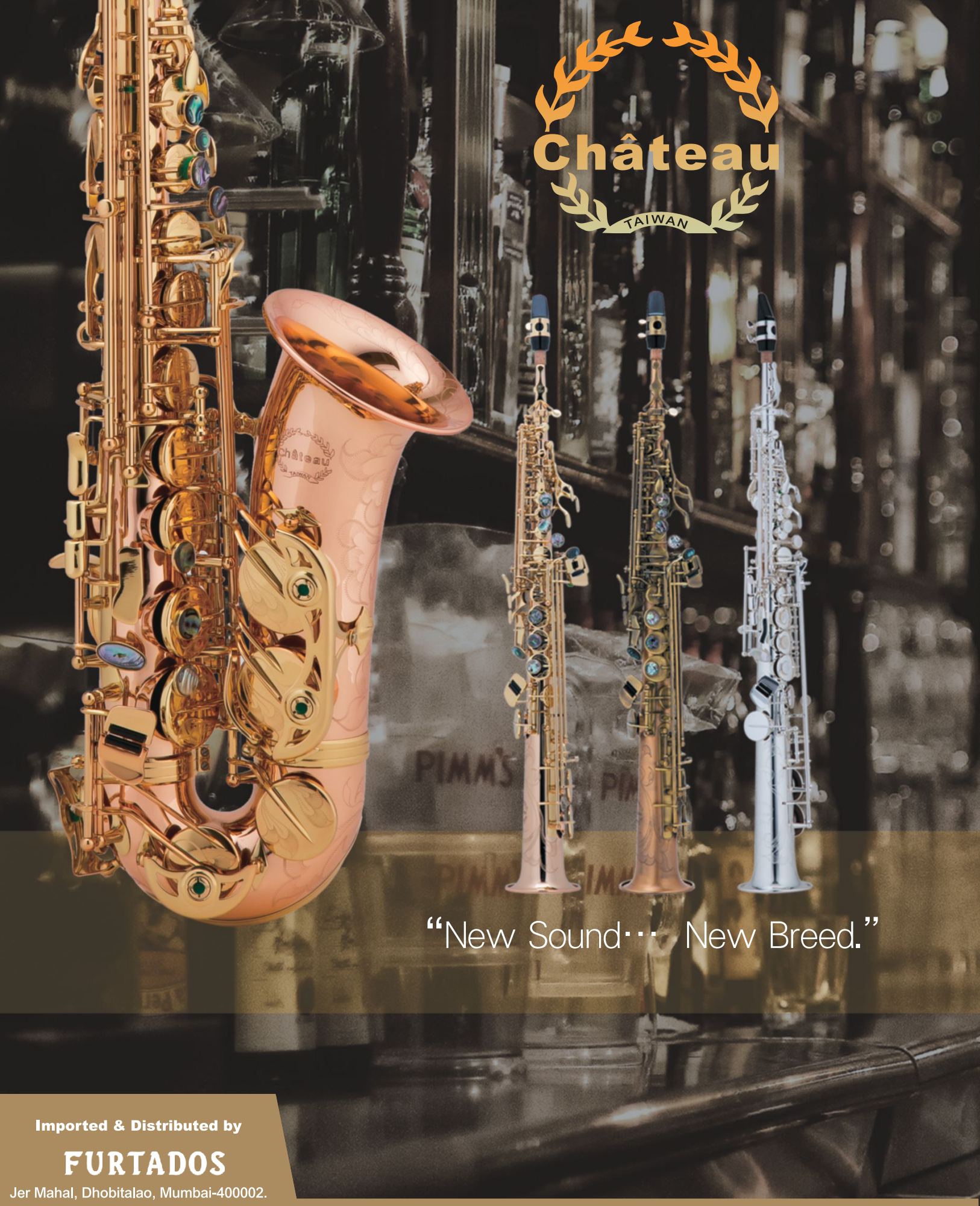

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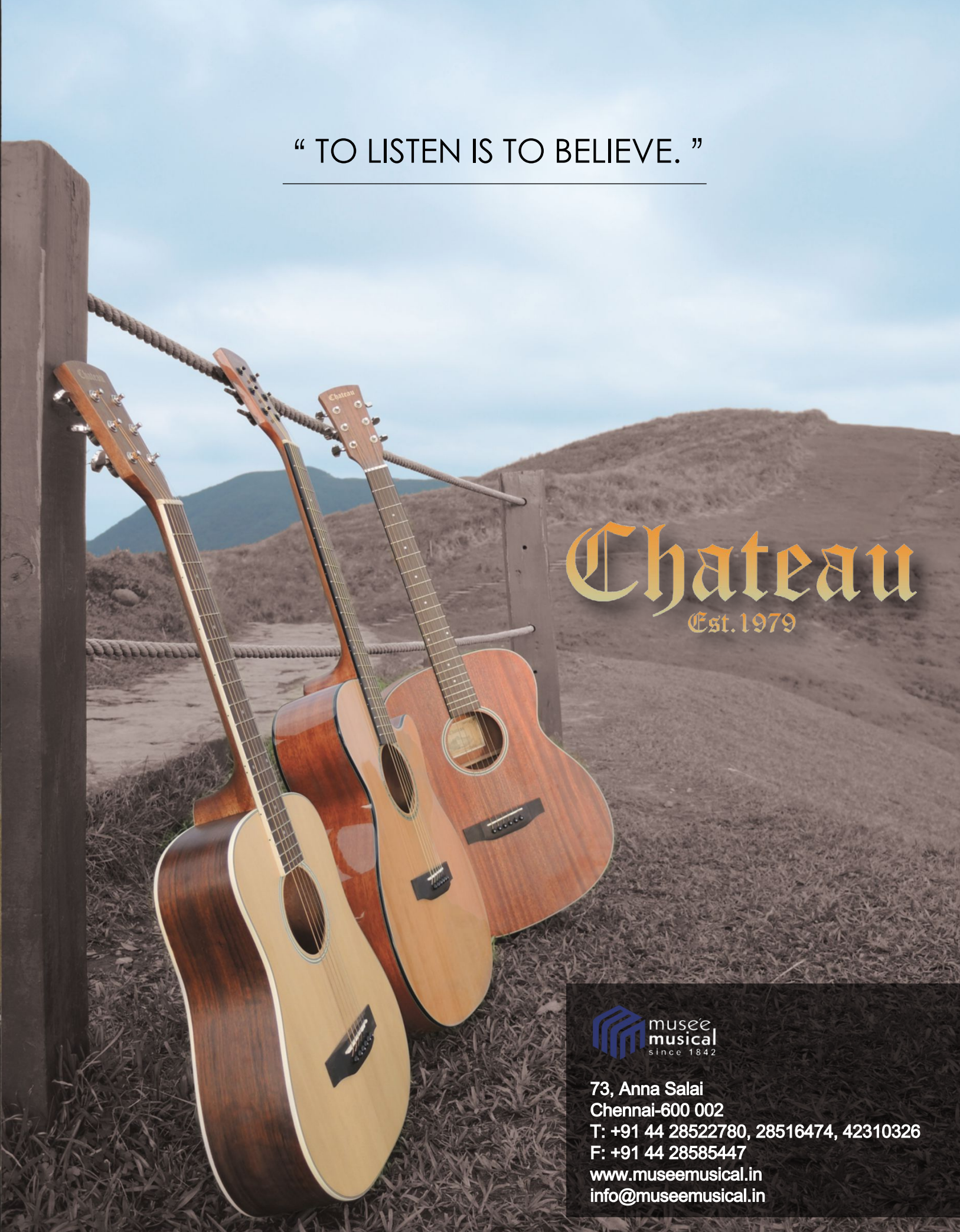
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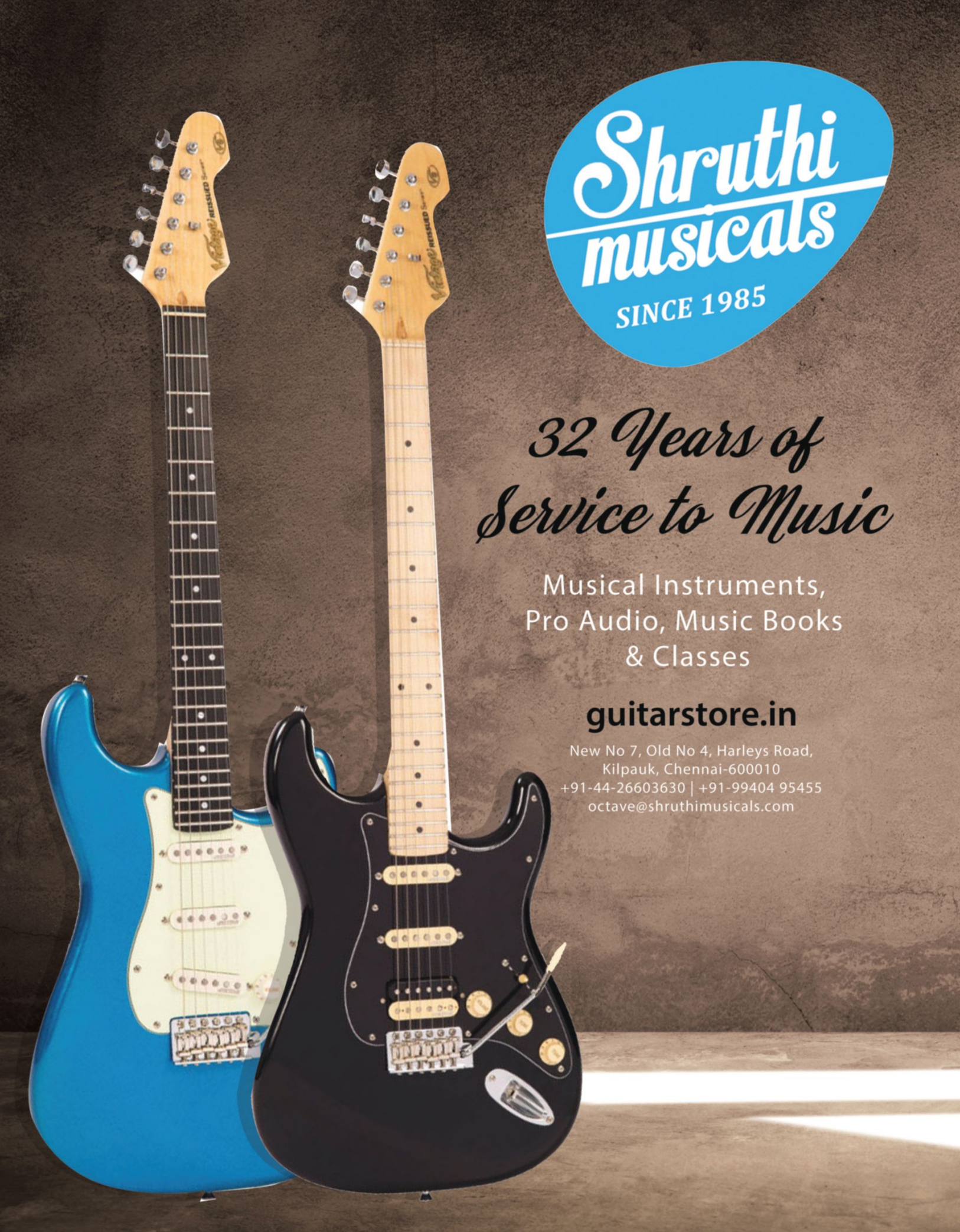
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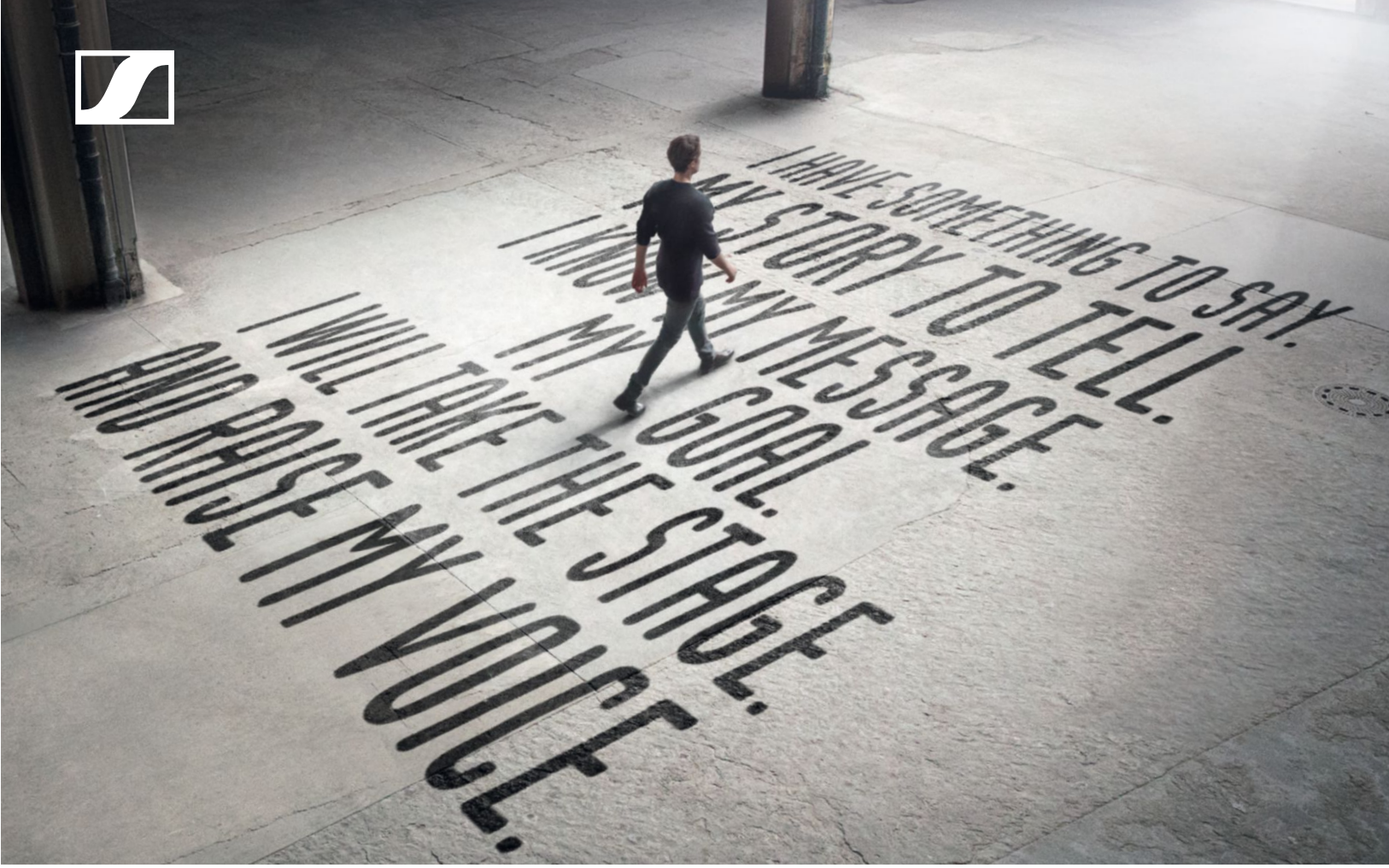

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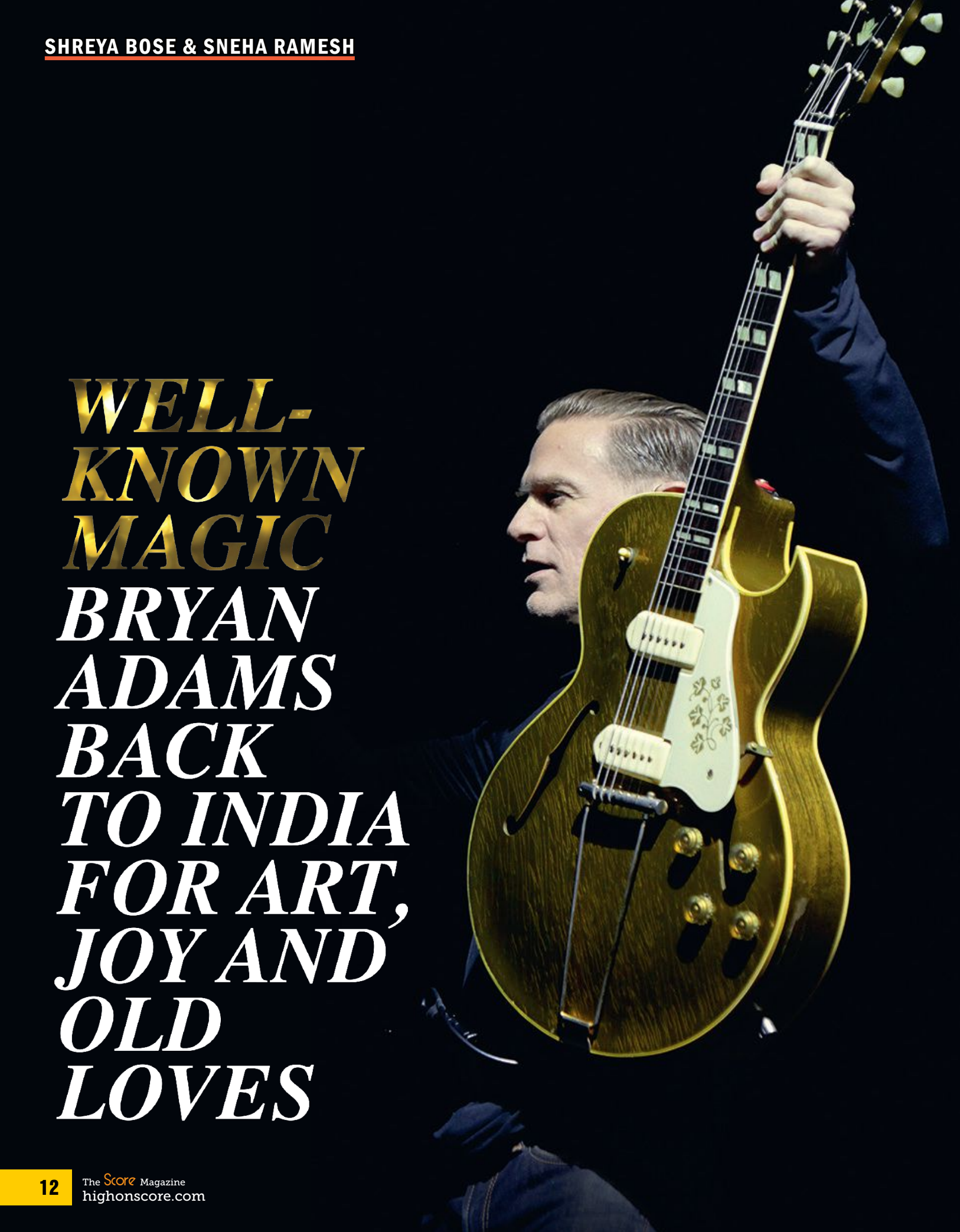
BRYAN ADAMS BACK TO INDIA FOR ART, JOY AND OLD LOVES



An introduction for Bryan Adams is the very definition of redundancy, for there are few who cannot identify the distinct grain of his all-too-familiar voice. His music is often a constant companion of adolescence, and a definite ingredient in nostalgia-driven mixtapes, reunion bands and all things related to memory lanes. However, the prolific hit maker is entirely averse to ideas of retirement and intends to keep his mind bristling with musicianship, touring and general immersion in all things that bring joy.

As one of the world's most recognizable musicians, Adams has long become good at toeing the line between gaining fame and giving back love. Though listing his musical accomplishments would take up a substantially thick scroll, a couple of them seem too significant to deserve silence. His global breakthrough Reckless was birthed when he was 25. In 1991, he began the Waking Up the World tour which brought him to parts of the world that Western artists were still yet to visit. India was among these parts. In 2006, he co-wrote "Never Gonna Break My Faith" which was sung by the likes of Aretha Franklin and Mary J. Blige In 2011, he became the first international artist to play in Nepal. He has been playing sold-out shows and walking up to cheering crowds for as long as anyone can remember.

Adams is equally defined by his focus on humanitarian efforts. The Bryan Adams Foundation aspires to do all it can to facilitate education for children across the world. Adams is a regular name in concerts and activities undertaken to provide aid across the world. He has helped raised money for underprivileged kids in Pakistan, for Palestinian refugee children, and for victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami (among many, many others). He has also successfully campaigned for the creation of the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary.

With The Score Magazine, he took the time to let us glimpse into his mind, and answers some questions about how he sees himself, how he loves what he does and what keeps him going at the speed of light.

Have you ever been tired of performing a certain song?

Never

Of all your collaborators, was there anyone who changed your fundamental outlook to music?

I have to give credit to Jim Vallance for that, he was the one that initially inspired me to write better songs.

Do you think there is any medium that can offer you the same creative freedom as music?

Music is a powerful thing, and as I look back on my life, music is symbolically intertwined like a calendar. I can remember where I was from a song, or an album.

How much fun do you still manage to have on stage?

It's always different, no matter how many shows we have done, each night is unique, and the best fun comes from the crowd interactions.

How often are you surprised by your audience?

I'm always humbled by the reaction we get.

How does one last as long in the business as you have?

I get asked this all the time, and I can only answer it by saying that I take care of myself. I've got a great team, and we try to have a laugh whenever we can.

Have you ever thought of doing something else?

I've always loved creating things and I get a bit anxious if I'm not busy making something from nothing. It's the process I love. Creating a team, making magic happen.

Is there a single idea that drives you to keep creating music and taking it to the World?

I still love what I do more than anything. I'm really grateful and privileged I can still go out there and play and sing, and I can kind of feel like we are better than ever.

What is the best compliment you have ever received?

I got a message from someone saying thanks for the music because she's got depression and it's helped her. This is the best message any musician could ever get. Even in my own lifetime, I've tackled sadness with music.

What principles would you never compromise?

I've never got to the point where I've taken for granted the fact that music puts a roof over my head.

What do you think was the best decade in music?

The '60s. There was so much great music and it was so innovative — there was the Beatles, the Stones, Woodstock, and Zeppelin — I can go on and on. The '70s were amazing, too. I actually thought maybe the '70s might have been the greatest, but it was only because I was sort of just waking up in the '70s to what music was for me.

What are the memories you most associate with your early days as an artist?

The fridge was empty at home, I had to go to work. It was strange but fun to be working the bars and clubs from 15, and I worked for years without a pay cheque, totally ripped off. But once I was able to pay my rent, I was even more grateful for the times I'd had struggling. Back in 1977, my father and mother had both put $1,200 away for my university education, but they didn't count on me dropping out at 15. So I asked my mom, I said, 'Listen I've seen this piano in the window, do you think we can put that $1000 toward that piano' She agreed.

My dad wasn't really around and didn't have much to say, but when he did finally catch up, I think he was quite curious about what I was going to do for a real job.

What is a fact about you that you think your fans would be surprised by?

I learnt pretty early on that I shouldn't be driving I have no capacity to drive long distances, as I fall asleep.

Who are you listening to these days?

Drake, Chris Martin

What do you think about the shift of music onto the digital realm? Do you ever get nostalgic for the LPs, CDs and DVDs?

For sure the companies that control music are doing fine, I'm pretty sure the artists and songwriters aren't getting the best deals. This is predominately because songwriters and artists don't get together to try and change things, and most of them have given their control to other people.

Who was the first musician to give your goose bumps?

Tina Turner. Working with her was amazing. I used to go to see her in the clubs when I was in my late teens, early 20s before she hit the big time. It was incredible to watch her. It was such a privilege to have sung 'It's Only Love' with her, especially since I was only 24 at the time.

What is the best thing an upcoming musician can do with their life?

Get into music because you love music, not to become famous. If your dream is fame, you have set yourself up to be disappointed.

Is there anything that you do every single day?

A ritual for making or playing music, perhaps? Fruit and veggies, with the occasional cup of tea.

What was your first impression of India?

On my first trip to India, there were no cars to collect us, so Keith my guitarist and I got in a taxi from the airport. The suspension was broken in the car so we leaned over the seat to watch where we were going. Along the way we had to stop because an elephant had gone to sleep in the middle of the road. That story would not happen anywhere else in the world, welcome to India.

Tell us about your India tour. Are you excited and is there anything special for the Indian fans?

We have a great show in store, our best work. We spent months preparing this tour, it's a long way from our first tour of India. It's a long way from our first tour of India where the light switches were large levers beside the stage. It's always an adventure when I've been here. This will be our fifth tour of India, I'm not sure many artists have done that from the West.

What's your perception about India and the music in India?

Well it goes without saying your finest musician is AR Rahman, I've also admired the great Ravi Shankar and his daughter Anoushka, who is also an excellent sitar player.

The gigs are lined up in support of your current 21 track compilation, could you elaborate a little bit on the line up?

It's called the Ultimate tour because of the album we released last December called ULTIMATE. It's a collection of songs which truly represent the live show, even the arrangements on some of the songs in this collection are slightly different. The tour itself, as I said earlier, took a lot of work to put together, it has literally taken two years. As a songwriter and musician, you are always creating – it's what you do. So even though I've released an 'ultimate' collection, I'm always looking ahead. There are two new songs included…both written this year with the message that love still counts, even in uncertain times.

What's your take on the current music scene worldwide? How has it changed?

I think all of it is the same really. There are artists that will last for a long time, and there are artists that are shooting stars and burn bright for a moment. That's the way it is. I'm more like one of those space stations that floats along and every now and then an astronaut pops out and says hi. Rock has been dying a slow death on the charts for a long time, yet for the most part, rock acts dominate the live concert scene still

What's your message for your fans in India?

I'm really looking forward to the gigs; we've always loved playing there. We'll be playing all the songs you know and love, and have possibly heard. Come and see the show!

RAPID FIRE

Favourite song of all time- Changes – by David Bowie

One song of yours that you can't stop listening to till date- 18 Till I Die

If there is one thing you'd like to change in the world of music, what would it be? Artists shouldn't be fooled by the internet — concentrate on the songs more than social media. No matter what, you have to realize your worth. Your music is a valuable thing, and once you give it away, it's very hard to get it back

Describe your music in one single word- Rocking

Your idol- My brother.

DID YOU KNOW

He quit school at age 16, and used the money his parents gave saved for his education to purchase a grand piano.

His fourth album "Reckless" was the first album by a Canadian artist to sell a million copies in Canada.

He wrote his massive hit (Everything I Do) I Do It For You in under an hour. It took about 45 minutes.

He was a close friend to Amy Winehouse, especially during the latter's troubled times.

In 2003, he was invited for a five-minute portrait session with the Queen at Buckingham Palace. The following year, his photo appeared on a Canadian stamp.

He visited former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper at his official residence and turned the meeting into an informal "jam session".

He is a talented and devoted photographer. In fact, he has photographed the likes of Pink, Morrissey, Amy Winehouse, Pete Doherty, Billy Idol, Lana Del Ray and Mick Jagger. Heis photograph of Kate Moss which appeared in GQ Magazine. His work has been published in Harper's Bazaar, British Vogue, L'uomo Vogue, Interview magazine, Esquire and i-D . He has also shot ad campaigns for Converse,Guess Jeans, Montblanc, Sand, Fred Perry, John Richmond, and Escada.

His first label contract was for one dollar.

He too, has appeared on a Canadian stamp that was released in 2009.

He has admitted that "Summer of 69" is about sex in summertime. We're not sure if this has ruined the song for you or made it better, but Adams has been explicit about the fact.

He had a cameo in a Clint Eastwood film named "Pink Cadillac".

Anushka Manchanda

Singer

I was in school when 18 Till I Die released. This album was so epic for us. It was edgy and cool and also soft and romantic..perfect for all the teenage angst and the misdirected rebellion, and of course the epic feeling of falling in love! The Only Thing That Looks Good On Me..so sexy! I Wanna Be Your Underwear... dangerous! Have You Ever Loved A Woman..images of Johnny Depp and fairytale romances..and 'close dancing' with your crush. I haven't really listened to Bryan Adams in a long time but if you play this album I think I will be able to sing along to every song.

Maalavika Manoj

Singer-Songwriter

A few months ago, when I was at sound check for Anirudh Ravichander's show at the Wembley Arena in London, I noticed a dusty little piece of paper taped to the stage floor. When I looked closer I realised it was a set list from Bryan Adams' show at the very same venue two weeks earlier. So as an ardent fan, I quietly ripped the piece of paper off and put it in my bag.

Sangeet Haldipur

Singer & Composer

If you're born in the 80s , there's no way that you wouldn't know about the pop-rock sensation Bryan Adams. I'm Ready ,Heaven ,are some of his works which I dig. I, in fact had the great fortune of meeting him when I was performing with " Aasma " and we were asked to open for his shows in Delhi and Bengaluru. Was so chilled out and funny ! He just knew the pulse of his audience which reflected in his music and that for me is a gift for any artist.

Sajith Satya

Guitarist & Composer

A huge fan of his voice and music . As a kid , during my road trips with my family , songs such as ' Everything I do ' , ' Please forgive me ' and obviously 'Summer of 69' would always play on my dad's stereo , from singing along to his entire album with my family and to eventually picking up the guitar and learning his songs , he's been a huge inspiration musically . I still think 'Summer of 69' was one of the first few riffs I learnt on the guitar . Yes , I still do listen to him cause his songs are timeless and Golden , they connect to me on a personal level and reminds me of all the great memories I made while listening to his music!

Shashaa Tirupati

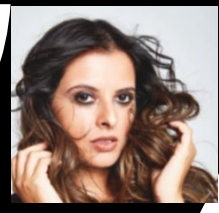
Singer

Who doesn't love us Canadians?!! Hehe. And then hes Bryan Adams! But I wasnt exposed to his music growing up. I suppose i heard him for the very first time in as late as 2007! And in my mind, the raspyness and soul in his voice would perhaps be voice dreams for thousands of singers. Its then that i perhaps went through his entire discography and on loop for some 3 months. My favorite would have to be Lonely Nights.

MILI

Singer-Songwriter

If you're like me from the MTV generation, you've definitely listened to & loved Bryan Adams music! I've been fortunate to have met him on one of his trips to India and have a great conversation about music. Remember him talking about how the Blues influenced him in his guitar playing and songs . Favourite songs - Cant stop this thing we started, All for love, Run To You . And My most favourite being - Back To You (Unplugged Version)



The week-long India leg of the tour will bring Adams all over the sub-continent. Here's the tour schedule:

9th October 2018 @Ahmedabad @Sardar Patel Stadium | 11th October 2018 @Hyderabad @Hitex City

12th October 2018 @Mumbai @Jio Gardens | 13th October 2018 @Bengaluru @Ozone Urbana

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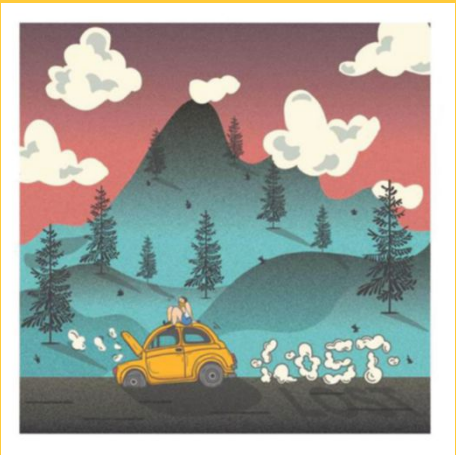
SHREYA BOSE

INDIE REVIEWS



Never (Angad Katari):

(Disclaimer)Never was released nine months ago. In my infinite misfortune, I came across it only last week. Even if it is not protocol to review anything after such a time-lapse, I chose to make an exception because of what this song brought to me.

Now answer me this, is most good art borne out of sadness, misery and pain? If so, then what does it say about our ability to find joy? Does it mean that we do not turn joy to art as often as pain? Is it because joy needs no meaning, while the only way to accept pain is to elevate it?

Before you roll your eyes at my highly amateurish musings, let me defend myself by saying that these questions were engender by the song. Every time I played Never, I had new questions to grapple with.

Angad Katari understands melancholy. It wouldn't be a stretch to imagine that he has lived with protracted sadness. The maudlin influence of youth, too, has played it's role. Lamentation is washed with lyrics that resemble short, repressed breaths. The words are memories of an urgent anguish, rather than long hours of carefully curated woe.

Never Fell this way,

So lost and hurt to be the same,

Never fell this way,

So lost and hurt to be the same,

Coherence is minimally adhered to, and instruments fill in lyrical gaps. Sounds weave around themselves with an abandon made possible by grief, with Nawahineokala'i Linziloti's cello emitting a siren song of plea and desolation.

Katari's sound is decidedly, almost uncomfortably honest. It's melodic superiority saves the listener from the inconvenience of introspection, unless that's the kind of thing you seek actively. Whatever the intention, Never possesses a certain magnetism made possible by familiar feeling. It inspires connection, especially when you come to it by yourself.

Takiye Pe Sar (Amanda Sodhi with Drishyam Play):

There is something irreplaceable about universal experiences. No matter how often you talk about love, loss and personal redemption, it remains relatable. It is not possible to underplay their significance, which makes them entirely safe bets to sing about.

That Amanda Sodhi's voice is a charm is an established fact. What makes this song stick is how familiar it feels, even on your first listen. It expresses private rumination, dwelling on the loss of love (the singer's first heartbreak in the States) and a question that most people wouldn't ask out loud.

Do you remember me?

The music, as the video thrives on pensive, borderline-meditative circles. There is very little embellishment; image and vocals take front stage. The video is especially pleasant, because it provides resolution while the song doesn't. Moving on by virtue of a new friendship has been a well-explored concept, but this one manages to divulge a disarming closeness through video. Rising from the morass of bad memory is hard enough, but is is marvellously juxtaposed again the rarely-appreciated joys of female friendship. That, combined with serene vocal lines deserves more than a few minutes of applause.

Kaahe Re (Antariksh):

Jekyll and Hyde remains a classic for good reason. Duality is fundamental to human nature. If I can paraphrase F. Scott Fitzgerald, show me a man and I (rather, his therapist) will show you his deep-seated psychological conflict.

Kaahe Re works this cure truth with a far-too-frequent example. Security vs. passion. A man in a soul-crushing desk job va a man taking to the mountainous wilderness with a leather jacket and a guitar. The video is vivid, with surprising investment in detail. The cherry? A semi-blurred glimpse of a coffee mug with a post-it reading "Don't sleep".

The song pivots around simple conviction : go after joy. Despite all that stands in the way, not much else can provide a reason for life. Tonality weaves between ballad and eager, with clear classic rock underpinnings. It's exhortation to abandon overthinking and just invest in your heart's calling is an uncomplicated message, and certainly much needed in a world that gives you too many options that lead to the same kind of nowhere.

I wish I could Fly (Nine Lives):

This seems like a good month for music that emphasises oft-repeated messages in pleasant meanderings. Nine Lives takes to the common human desire for self-actualisation. Since people tend to say "I wish I could do what I want to" more frequently than they ask for food, it makes sense to craft a song's central ethos out of this sentiment.

The song is upbeat and agreeable. CJ Charanjit R's vocal texture is admirable, and makes the somewhat cliched lyrics sounds more welcoming. The video is similarly unsurprising, with images of children denoting, one assumes, a future more aligned with the heart's desire. It's a bit hard to reconcile words like "Is it so easy for you to forget me?" with shots of smiling children doing school activities that really makes no one smile (Seriously, what child gets this excited about ringing a temple bell?).

While the theme is not entirely cohesive, the song is arranged with enough simplicity that "catchy" is an adequate description. Additionally, it is easy enough to sing along to, and will probably be on playlists featured in drunk karaoke nights.

PERFECT STRANGERS

Bikramjit Bose
(Instagram: thebadlydrawnboy)

Why the name perfect strangers?

When the band was formed back in 2013, there were just 2 people who knew each other. All the others came through reference or through a FB ad for 'band members required'. We jammed for the first time and things sounded really good. Since it was a perfect combination of 6 strangers, hence the name.

Who or what has been your biggest influences in the music scene?

Our music is hugely influenced by bands like Toto, Steely Dan and Eagles. I don't think there are too many Indian bands who are into that kind of sound, but we loved Motherjane.

Tell us about your ongoing or upcoming projects / music

A Strange Connection', our debut album, is a collection of eight songs that have been born out of personal experiences and conversations. From watching couples clicking another useless selfie to the practical challenges of working in the independent music industry and conversations with a transgender person; the songs are diverse and yet real. The music is not restricted to any genre but it's more like rock n' roll meets RnB and funk. Some of the songs address contemporary issues, like the cycle of abuse in toxic relationships (‘Blow-Up Doll’), or the stigmatisation of the queer community (‘Wild Side’); while others talk of the obsession with social media (‘Selfie’) or the quirks of the current music scene (‘Just for Gigs’). And there are tunes that talk of the more universal yet personal themes of love, loss and making music (‘Valerie’, ‘Stay’ and ‘Breaking Away’).

If there is something you’d like to change about the indie music scene, what would it be?

It's silly to expect that people or 'Aam Janta' will stop listening to Bollywood or film music and start listening to Indie music. But there are some fantastic movies being made which are truly Indie in nature and I wish they would consider Indie bands to compose the music for them. It's already happening in pockets and we wish it would happen more.

In a country with lots of talent and competition, how do you keep your music fresh and exciting for the listeners?

There are loads of bands who are making fantastic music. We hear stuff that sound great everyday. I think the key to that is to make more edgy music videos. Nowadays most music consumption happens through visual media (YT, FB,etc) and hence if a band invests time and money to make a music video that's unique, they get shared and distributed much more...thanks to social media, it's easy to spread your music if it stands out.

What’s your songwriting process?

Generally one person thinks of a mood, lays out a riff and melody structure. Then we all meet and jam on it to figure out what parts the instruments will play. We give arrangements a lot of importance and that takes quite a bit of time. Last comes the lyrics which the vocalists work on. Generally we take about a month to finish a song.

Tell us a little bit about your jam sessions and what they look like

We basically divide jam sessions into 3 types- only instruments, only vocals, and vocals with instruments. Jampads can be expensive, so we keep renting jampads to a minimum. We work out all instrumental stuff at jampad while we meet at Raphael's place to work out all harmonies and vocal parts. Once that's over, we get back to jampad again to put everything together. Centerstage is our preferred Jampad in Bangalore as it's spacious and all equipment are beautifully maintained.

Music links:

'A Strange Connection' , debut album by Perfect Strangers is available on following platforms

Bandcamp link: https://bit.ly/2DmDUVq

Apple link: https://apple.co/2xrkWqB

Amazon link: https://amzn.to/2NkbeRD

Spotify link: https://spoti.fi/2xmIhJQ

Google play link: https://goo.gl/i7CLUX

Tidal link: https://tidal.com/browse/album/95190594

Napster link: https://bit.ly/2xsSq8D

QUIRKS & QUERIES

VIOLINIST PADMA SHANKAR

Tell us how you first decided to pick the violin as an instrument

I was a very little girl when I started learning music. Too little to make a choice or decision. My mother, my first guru, Smt. Lakshmi Narayanan is an amazing vocalist and Vainika (Veena player). She unfortunately could not pursue her musical dreams for various reasons. So she always desired that her children take up music seriously. As a little girl my mother saw that I had the ability to decode into swaras any song she sang. This is a very important pre requisite for instrumental music. Since I has this natural ability, she thought violin would be best suited. Violin is an instrument is like Sarva vyaapi. It is an indispensable part of Indian classical music. It is there in dance music, film music and adapts beautifully into Amy fusion ensemble also. So I can't say I chose, but the violin was chosen for me

Who has been your major influence in shaping up your musical journey?

Undoubtedly my gurus. My mother in the beginning. Then, I did my basic training under (late) Sri. Ramakrishna Sarma of Mumbai. After this I was extremely fortunate to have found a guru, guide, mentor all in my guru, the violin maestro Padma Bhushan Sri Lalgudi G Jayaraman.

Three artists you look up to and why?

This is a tough one. Surely, the number is much greater than 3. Each one of the artistes I have played with has influenced me in some way. I have learnt with each experience and still continue to do so. Lalgudi sir, himself was an epitome of perfection, grace and innovation. He always only gave his best and encouraged his students to do so too

If you could collaborate with an artist for your music, who would it be and why?

I have been fortunate to have collaborated with the best as well as The Who's who in classical music. Am always looking forward to new collaborations.

How do you think the music scene has evolved or changed from the time you started?

Music is a creative art and change is definitely going to keep on happening. If it doesn't it gets stagnant. Music has refined and changed with the times. Now artists not only pay attention to the content of music but the presentation also in terms of how well the acoustics are and so forth

What makes your music unique and stand out?

Without sounding pompous or condescending, I think it's me who makes my music unique. My learning, understanding, practice and then presentation and of course life's experiences all together add a special flavouring that is me and me only.

A piece of music you wish was written for violin but wasn't

In Indian classical music, none of the traditional pieces of music were written especially for an instrument or for that matter even for a performance. They were not composed with the intention of being a concert piece. Hence it is always vocal based. Now we have some contemporary pieces composed as instrument specific.

Tell us your proudest moment in your journey

When I played a violin solo in front of my guru and he sat for the whole performance. Unforgettable and truly blessed,

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

ARJUN KANUNGO

You started as a musician at the age of 18. Do you have any music training and what was your biggest learning when you started?-

I have been in this amazing music industry with talented colleagues and artists for 6 years now. Until I was 17, I didn't even know I wanted to peruse music. I was busy trying to figure out what to do with my life, and doing a student job. My whole family is involved in business, so naturally, I was inclined towards business sector or wanted to make my career in architecture, I wasn't sure. And that's when I found music. It ignited that passion in me and I realized that this was truly what I wanted to do. So I wrapped everything up and came back home to see where music could take me. I decided to follow music as my career. I felt that I get strong connection with music and I spent almost 7-8 years learning music and it's been quite a journey since then. I'm still learning.

Do you have any music training and what was your biggest learning when you started?

I've been training in Indian Classical for 8 years now. I taught myself how to play the guitar via the internet so you could say I'm self-taught. Towards the beginning of my career, I met Asha Bhosle from whom I have learned a lot while I was touring with her. The biggest learning is that you never stop learning.

You collaborated with Momina Mustehsan on this video. Tell us about the association and what made it a perfect combination.

Momina is a lovely person, very sweet and easy to work with and I think that we got along very well. I think she is talented. We wanted to do a song, and when she heard the song, she really liked it. I had a song which I made, which was "Aaya Na Tu" and I went with the song to Universal Music and they really liked the song and its when they introduced me to Momina and I have to admit that I hadn't heard of her before this. When I saw her videos on coke studio I was immediately convinced. This collaboration was her debut. I was very excited about it and then they made her listen to the song, she loved the song as well. It just kind of came together after that.

What are the challenges you face as an independent artist in the country?

It's this assumption that non-film music is not as big as film music. The numbers tell a different story. Non film music is a better business model for an artist than film music. Singers in this country don't get enough face time. Unless you put a face to a name, singers will be easily forgotten, which is why I am adamant about appearing in my own music videos. Also, creating non-film music is a huge challenge. People should appreciate music for music and not based on the popularity of the film it is attached to.

Tell us about your new song Aaya Na Tu. What was your favorite memory from the entire making of the video?

Aaya Na Tu revolves around the emotions like longing, love, loss, and rejection. The idea was to capture the feeling of being left behind. It's a feeling that is so relatable, we've all experienced heartbreak. The hope was to capture that feeling for the next generation. It's such an intense emotion that I feel like it deserved a song. This song is very close to my heart and it was fun shooting it with Momina. Momina has an obsession with Bandra Worli Sea Link, she has never seen it before and if you ask her what she knows about India, she would say – Bandra Worli Sea Link, She calls it the "Bombay-Worli Sea Link!" Whenever I put up pictures of myself on the Sea Link on Instagram, she'll be the first one to comment, saying: "Bombay-Worli Sea Link! She thinks all of Bombay looks like that haha!

How do you balance being a composer as well as a singer?

It's not hard. I think I was born to do this. It's my purpose, to create things and my brain is always working. It's hard to shut off sometimes. I think music was the right fit for me because of that. I am also an actor and have a couple of things lined-up in near future. I think that on some levels, even as a kid I knew I wanted to create stuff.

You have collaborated with many popular artists/ composers in the country. What has been your best experience to date?-

I think I've been blessed because I've worked with the best in the industry. I love collaborating and it's interesting to work with great talents! I have collaborated with Badshah, Mithoon, Neha Kakkar and Momina Mustehsan and it has been a learning experience for me. They are very experienced musicians and there's plenty to learn from all of them. And since my first single – Baaki Baatein Peene Baad, which was only three years ago, I have released so many songs and all of them have been quite successful but partly because I have been able to work with great people like them

Tell us about your upcoming projects-

There are a couple of projects that I am looking forward to. There is another single which shall release by November. I have a web series coming out with Eros now on the 24th of September. The show is called 'Side Hero' and I'm starring in it alongside Gauhar Khan and Kunaal Roy Kapoor. I am focusing on these things at the moment. More on this soon!

If there is one musician you would like to collaborate with in the future, who would it be and why?

There are many actually, now I have some projects that are coming up, some cool collaboration in the near future. I will keep you updated on them. I grew up listening to everything from old-school metal to Indian Classical — so everyone from Iron Maiden to Kishori Amonkar. I really admire the work that Amit Trivedi, Amit Mishra and Clinton Cerejo are doing at the moment. I would love to work with them. Also, Arijit Singh, he is amazing and I think everyone loves him. And of course, AR Rahman!

You have a studio of your own. Tell us a little bit about your set up. -

I was in college at the time and had set up a professional recording studio where bands and musicians would come to jam and record music. I would wake up around 7 am for college and then head over to the studio at around 1 pm every day. It was hard work, and I would be in the studio until almost midnight. That's where I learned how things work. A lot of people who are big names in the industry have recorded there at that time. Although my seniors are stars now, they were only making a name for themselves in the industry back then."

Song on repeat on your playlist -

The new Eminem album 'Kamakazi'.

Your best sung and composed song till date-

Aaya Na Tu's reprise version.

Your dream stage to perform at-

There are too many.

If there is one thing you would like to see as a change in the music industry, what would it be?

Artists should stop competing with one another. It's pointless, counterproductive and not what this art is for. ■

LANGUAGE OR MUSICAL POWRESS?

Any form of music inherently comprises of two major aspects which stand out. The first obvious aspect is musical prowess like tempo,pitch, dynamics and the complexities of presentation. The second important aspect goes to the language and the way in which it is pronounced. A great composition can be perceived with the right proportions of these two aspects. There is a debate which goes in Carnatic Music which says that many artists ignore the linguistic beauty of the compositions but focus more on the musical brilliance.

While musical prowess is also important for a composition, ignoring the beauty of a language makes it incomplete for sure. In Carnatic compositions like Pancharatna Kritis (Saadhinchene, Yendaro Mahanubhavulu) and lyrically brilliant ones like Entha Nerchina (Suddha Dhanyasi) and Manasuloni Marmamunu (Hindolam), lyrics bring an altogether new flavor to the composition. In fact, showing emphasis on lyrical beauty brings a new dimension to the rasikas.

A lyrical dimension for a composition also makes the listener appreciate the thought of the composer who linked the tune with great musical magic. In order to bring musical excellence, some of the performing artists divide the phrases of a composition in odd placements which actually impacts the aesthetic beauty of the performance. But with ample care in understanding the nuances of the composition's language, the performer can reach greater realms of appreciating the beauty of a genre.

This feature doesn't confine to only Carnatic Music alone but also for all genres of music. In fact, even an instrumentalist needs to understand the lyrical beauty of a composition to emote better and bring a great feel to a performance. The main reason for this is because- there is lot of a thought and opinion which goes in writing a lyric which deserves to be thrown light on. Language is one of the most essential forms of expression and bringing an opinion out in a thumping manner. A learned artist would greatly balance the linguistic aspects along with musical brilliance hand in hand.

Even as rasikas, there is a need to throw emphasis on both these aspects and embrace musical art in its purest form. Here are some of greatest Carnatic compositions where highlighting language brings amazing listening experience.

1. Chakkani Raaja Maargam- Kharaharapriya Raagam- Saint Thyagaraja

2. Gnanamosagaraada- Poorvikalyani Raagam- Saint Thyagaraja

3. Rangapura Vihaara- Brindavana SaarangaRaagam- Muttuswami Dikshitar

4. Kamakshi Amba- Bhairavi Raagam- Syama Sastry

5. Maanasa Sancharare- Saama Raagam- Mysore Vasudevachari

6. Odanu Jaripe- Saaranga Raagam- Saint Thyagaraja- (From Nouka Charitam)

7. Manasa Yetulorthune- Malayamarutham Raagam-Saint Thyagaraja

8. Nagumomu Ganaleni- Abheri Raagam- Saint Thyagaraja

9. Adivo Alladivo- Madhyamavati Raagam- Annamayya

10. Brahmamokkate- Bouli Raagam- Annamayya

GAJENDRA PURI GOSWAMI

Hip-Hop's Two Faced Stance On Mental Illness

Earlier this month hip-hop lost one of its most talented emcees, Mac Miller. Miller, who was only 26, died at his apartment from an apparent drug overdose only a month after releasing his latest album 'Swimming'. The rapper had always been vocal about his battle with addiction and depression in the past. But, the severity of his disabilities were not realized by many until his untimely death. His death reignited a debate over the surging problem of addiction and mental illness in America and the rest of the world. The subject was also at the centre of this year's most popular rap albums. Artists who had conveniently eschewed the debate until now began embracing the issue and addressing it head on. But, did this sudden change as a result of earnest intention or a deliberate attempt to sound woke is a question worth asking.

The first album in this catalogue of conscious albums was Kanye West's self-titled album 'Ye'. The album famously dealt with the Chicago born rapper's much discussed bipolar disorder. The album art for his album, a hilly landscape with " i hate being bi-polar, it's awesome" painted over became a matter fervent discussion amongst his fans. But, apart from the cover, a laconic reference embracing his medications, and describing his mental illness as a superpower Kanye failed to give an open call to the millions who suffer from his bipolar disorder on his 24 minute album.

But, Kanye returned for salvation with another album on the subject titled "Kids See Ghosts". The co-creator of this album, Kid-Cudi has been rapping about depression, anxiety and addiction since 2009. But, even 'Kids See Ghosts', a acid-laced trip into bohemian spiritualism, only loosely dealt with the subject and didn't do enough to restore Kanye's plummeting popularity. There were moments of redemption though, most notably on the title track where Kid Cudi croons- reaching out, huntin' for the truth / i'm guessing i'm just sick of running / all this time searching hard for something.." Cudi's self-aware lyrics perfectly resonated with kids suffering from PSTD, depression, and anxiety who turn to soul-searching through drugs and alcohol to cure their disabilities. This idea though reflected better in another hip hop album from this year that dealt with mental illness and addiction- J.Cole's KOD.

J.Cole's KOD deals with addiction more extensively and organically than any other rapper in the industry. Cole raps about several forms of addiction in his 12 track magnum opus. In 'photograph' he deals with addiction to social media by rapping about a man that falls in love with a beautiful woman on Instagram, on ATM he warns of pursuing money too adroitly by delivering a succinct and catchy hook over a triplet beat, and on 'the cut off' he illustrates the harm a single person's using can inflict on everyone around them.

J.Cole's album is a thoughtful meditation on addiction that these times demand. The album is musically refreshing and socially woke at the same time. Cole's connection to addiction and depression is also personal, but so is Kanye's connection with bipolar disorder. Yet the latter uses his illness to morph weighty subjects into headnodders and deflect the narrative from his careless statements, while the former uses it to educate people on the ills of these problems.

The album cover for the record depicts a gloomy-eyed king who hides children smoking pot and sniffing cocaine under his fur coat. This king might be the new face of hip-hop which, spearheaded by soundcloud rappers like Lil Pump, carelessly glorify sniffing cocaine and sipping lean in its music. Or it could be the modern society which normalises drug abuse and ridicules mental illness. The course of hip hop in times ahead may define the way our society will be leading. Whether it will be lead by men like J.Cole or Kanye and Lil Pump, only time will tell.■

KARISHMA D'MELLO

Musical activism is by no means a new concept and can be traced back to the origins of music itself. Essentially music is the expression of a feeling – through a melody of some sort. Moving beyond categorizations, genres and personal preferences, it represents something bigger – a universally renowned form of expression. It speaks to different people in different ways and its interpretation is subjective.

Sometimes it's therapeutic - catharsis for those looking for ways to communicate things that they would otherwise not be able to and occasionally this takes the form of championing causes and spreading awareness about things people feel strongly about. Now and then these resound well with the public and sometimes it's just another song lost in the big sea of music out there.

Now, this is by no means a generalization, but certain genres tend to have associations with some causes more than others. Punk rock for example, is almost anti-authority by definition, so it comes as no surprise that a large number of artists tend towards expressing political angst through their lyrics. Genres like hip-hop and rap originating from an underground urban movement, generally tend towards addressing social inequalities and street violence.

There are a ton of artists out there dedicated to ideologies and causes they feel deeply about or in some cases recognizing a way to market yourself to a niche crowd. Sometimes, however there are clear cut disasters that don't work out and are blatantly hypocritical. But hey, more people hear about it the better right? That's what "awareness" means, anyway.

International artists like Rage Against the Machine led by front man and activist Zack De La Rocha was a strong activist for political issues. Otep largely champions liberalism, veganism and LGBTQ rights which come across through every song. But perhaps a simpler and far more widely known example would be John Lennon's "Imagine" directed towards world peace.

As far as the Indian scene goes - Anuska Manchanda's most recent album champions animal rights and peaceful co-existence, while Ska Vengers are extremely vocal about their political ideologies. Heavy metal band – "Bloodywood" sing songs of mental health awareness. Folk band "Swarthama" based in Bangalore sing about religious hypocrisy, water scarcity and everything in between!

Bands with a cause often team up to perform for charity concerts. Arjit Singh performed in a concert dedicated towards spreading awareness about mental health issues and Pink Floyd's three member reunion was directed towards global action against poverty. Nagaland4Kerela's concert for the flood victims donations towards providing victims with relief.

Smaller concerts like the PMD – People May Donate in Goa a concert was an initiative to encourage people to donate to an animal welfare society.

Music that advocates for a cause is a form of expression that moves beyond typical romantic endeavors to address social issues, mental health, environmental problems, social injustice and political stances. Perhaps one of the more popular mediums of spreading awareness about a cause and definitely more entertaining than listening to an hour long seminar in a crowded room.

You have music concerts and artists speaking through lyrics and compositions and that's great. But how effective is it?

Obviously, the influence of music itself, is undeniable – but sometimes you have artists being called out for promoting the wrong kind of ideas. Genres have been singled out for promoting violence and bad behavior. Outright accusations directed towards heavy metal or hip-hop for being the cause of teenage suicide and gun violence is downright absurd. Nirvana were accused of actively promoting rape and sexual abuse with "Rape Me" and "Polly" when in fact the intent behind these tracks was completely contrary.

Activism through music and lyrics only work so long as they are accurately interpreted, failing which they promote the wrong message or no message at all. ■

MEGHAN KHARSYNRAP

LISTENING WITHOUT YOUR EARS

People don't really question if what they see or hear is just one version of the world. People forget that physical, social or economical differences can change our perspective of what the world is. The world today caters to the majority. It is evident in our transportation systems, in our books, our education systems and so on. Sometimes an attempt is made to bridge the gap to help someone with a disability function in the world— to help those with disabilities go independently to the doctor, to go to meetings, to collaborate with other professionals and even to work. They are very much capable they just don't have the means to do it.

This is probably why you may find it puzzling when I say that a deaf person can enjoy music.

Their form of listening is different and much more intimate- they use their sense of touch and their bodies to feel the buzz of the bass or percussion. Our bodies can differentiate between buzzing but one who has been accustomed to touch has a more intense experience of the same.

One must note however,that there are varying degrees of being deaf and hence listening to music could be an absolutely unique experience. Some people may heighten their listening with cochlear implants, some have to turn off their hearing aids off because the loud noise may ruin it and some have hearing problems in only one ear, some people hold balloons when the music is playing to intensify the experience.

In fact, February 1st, 1924, the New York Symphony Orchestra played Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at Carnegie Hall. It was broadcast on radio. That evening one of the listeners who tuned in was Helen Keller. Helen discovered that she could place her hand on the speaker and feel the different sounds as the music played. She was enthralled and wrote to the orchestra describing what she experienced as "A glorious hour".

Some deaf people even make music with more recent cases than the classic case of Beethoven. Evelyn Glennie, a percussionist from Edinburgh (Scotland) rose to stardom in the 1980's. Upon losing her hearing when she was 12 she enrolled herself to percussion classes. Glennie today plays many instruments and is delightful on the marimba. She was the reason music institutes changed their criteria for acceptance in the UK. When she applied for the Royal Academy of Music she was rejected initially for her disability. On her insistence and after deliberation they gave her a second audition which changed the way industries look at music as an industry. In her Ted Talk Glennie says "My aim really is to teach the world to listen." She wanted to explain that one should listen to their body and listen to sounds in a far broader sense then just by the ear. Glennie won the Polar music prize for her contributions to music.

There are also organisations like D-PAN and Deaf Zone that are trying to make music note accessible for the deaf. D-PAN (The Deaf Performing Art Network) is a not for profit that tries to make music and music culture accessible for the deaf. They recreate videos of famous songs with deaf or hard of hearing actors who use American sign language in the video. They also want to move outside of live performances and advocate subtitles for official DVDs and Broadcast for a deaf person's reference.

During some performances sign language interpreters like Amber Galloway Gallego are specially placed so they can sign the song lyrics live to a deaf audience. She manages to do this with style even with rap music.

However it takes several months to hire an interpreter for concerts. Even with all the development, Musicians don't acknowledge the people who quite literally want to listen with their heart. ■

ADITI SARAWAGI

INDIAN MUSIC INSTRUMENTS ON THE VERGE OF EXTINCTION

India has a rich culture in music and boasts of innumerable indigenous instruments. With the advent of technology and modern electric instruments, these old instruments are fading away with some instruments already being found only in museums. Considered to be the mother of all stringed instruments two centuries ago, there are hardly any **Rudra Veena** players anymore. Made of wood or bamboo, the strings produce subtle and soft music which seems to have lost its charm in the modern age. Though it is known for its meditative sound and use in classical music, both the Rudra and the Saraswati Veena have lost its following also due to it being an expensive instrument. Today very few artists like Bahuaddin Dagar, Jyoti Hegde and Hindraj Diwekar still play the instrument. Similarly the **Nagfani** or the Serpentine Horn was found vastly around Gujarat and Rajasthan but is now on the verge of extinction and is only sparingly used in rituals in Uttarakhand or in traditional ceremonies due to its serpent shaped head which is associated with the serpent coiled around Shiva's neck thus invoking power.

Mayuri, a peacock shaped stringed instrument was very popular in the nineteenth century in the Indian courts. The metal and wood body played with a bow is rarely used but it has seen a revival in recent years. It is said that is was invented by the sixth Sikh Guru Har Gobin and it is being used by Sikh musicians these days to play devotional music. A tiny instrument made of wrought iron, the morchang produces a beautiful melody when played using the mouth and left hand. Once very popular in Rajasthan and widely used in folk music, it is very difficult to find these days. This percussion instrument was also used in Carnatic music in the 20th century and even by R.D. Burman and S.D. Burman in Bollywood but is now pretty much extinct.

The **Yazh** is an ancient instrument and was immensely popular in its day. A string instrument, it was considered to be with one of the sweetest sounds. Also known as the Vil Yazh named after a mythological animal, Yali and was shaped like it. Once very popular in Tamil Nadu, it is now found only in museums. The **Ejuk/ Tapang** is an Assamese instrument and is made from Tita Lau, an indedible gourd. Its cultivation is considered inauspicious and because of this, the Ejuk is dying a slow death. Ejuk Tapung is primarily used by the Mishing Tribe of Assam and resembles a flute but has a unique sound.

Hailing from Manipur, the **Pena** is made of bamboo and coconut. All the folk songs of Manipur are attributed to the Pena. This mono string instrument is dying out and only 145 people know how to play it today. It is said to be the traditional instrument of the Meitei community and is only played during their festival Lai Haroba. Also known as a bass sitar, the **Surbahar**, is a string instrument from North India used in classical music. It was developed way back in the eighteenth century and was revamped in the twentieth century. Though you will still find surbahar players in the country, Imrat Khan being a well-known name, the instrument is fading away.

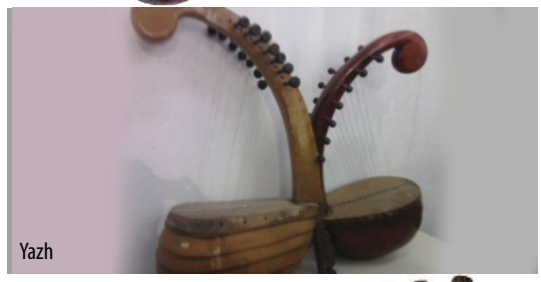
Sustaining ancient musical instruments is not easy and with newer forms launching everyday, there is a lack of teachers for them as well. Few instruments will probably always be evergreen but there are some which might not be saved. ■

Mayuri

Morchang

Nagfani

Rudra Veena


Yazh

Surbahar

SHASHWAT KARKARE

SABIAN FRX REVIEW

Sabian has been one of the top brands of cymbal companies on a global scale. Since its inception in 1981, it has been pushing the envelope in the world of cymbal manufacturing. From variety in cymbal series to a variety in endorsees, Sabian has done it all.

Earlier this year, Sabian launched a whole new series of cymbals titled FRX, the Frequency Reducing series. These cymbals where made using the B20 alloy, the "high-end" variety of cymbals; but with a twist. This new line was to be deemed as a completely new variety of cymbals as it was not a noise reduction cymbal but rather a cymbal that was manufactured in such a way that they merely reduced the number of frequencies produced. Hence, the sound produced is not softer, but just not as shrill.

This was done by a new method of finishing the cymbal wherein holes where drilled in strategic spots of the crashes and rides of this series. This removed the extra bulk and mass, which in turn eliminated the upper mid and high frequency (the white noise) which is often perceived as volume. The white noise worked well in large auditoriums and stadiums, but it stands out in a tiny venue.

Sabian hence marketed this series for drummers performing in smaller auditoriums, banquet halls, tiny clubs and the like. A cymbal where intensity and general volume of playing the cymbal is not sacrificed but the output level is kept at a minimum, making it an ideal cymbal choice for bands in garages or tiny venues.

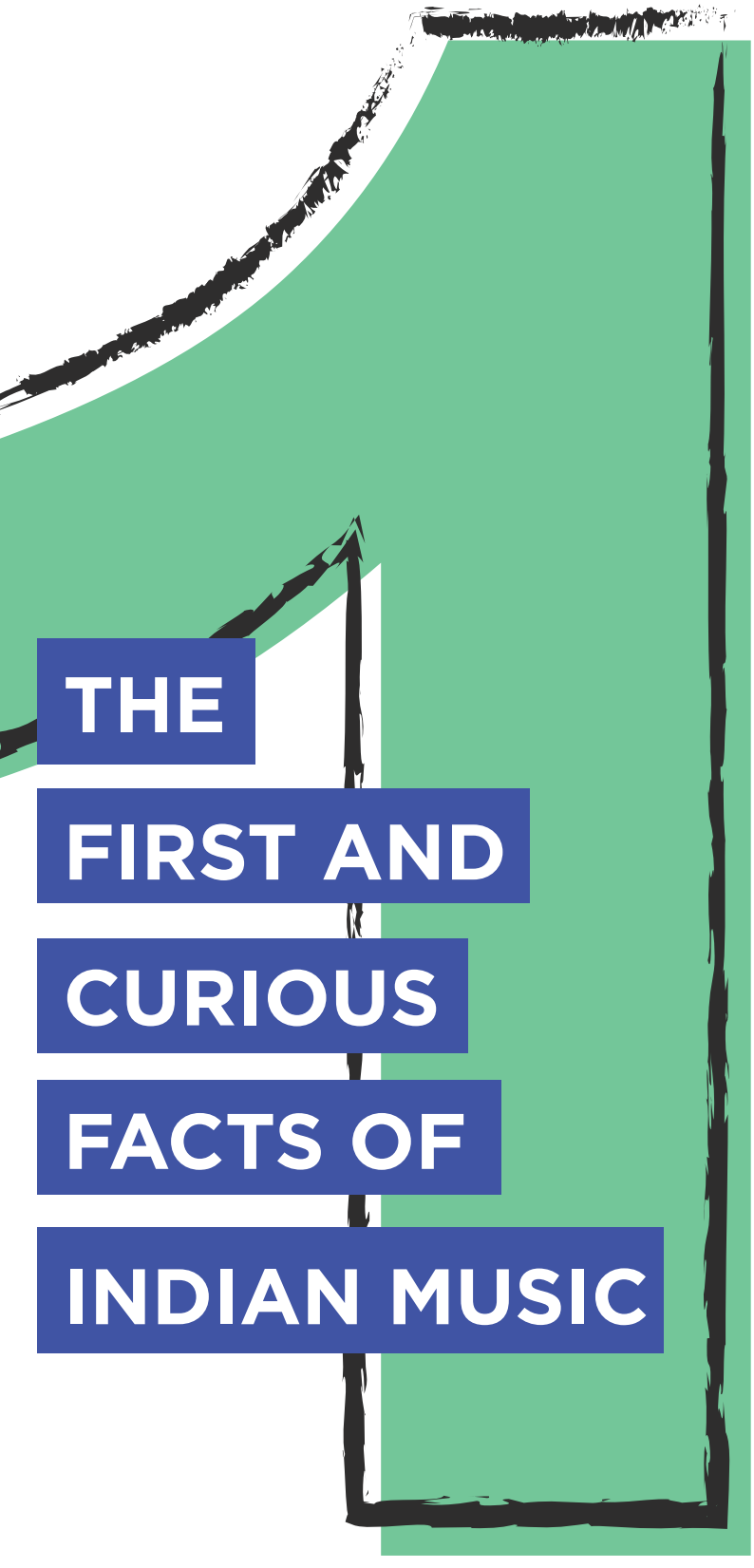
From the looks of it, Sabian seems to have struck a great balance in creating lower pitched cymbals that work well in small venues. But a closer look shows some flaws in this series.

While Sabian has made a difference in nuance and perception of cymbals with the FRX, it seemed to have swapped convenience for tone. The FRX series is a convenient set of cymbals that could prove to be very practical. But the tonal quality has reduced considerably. The cymbals sound too thin and brittle, with no expanse or body to the sound. It feels like Sabian went too far into removing mass and 'lowering volume' to the point where they have sacrificed overall quality. The resultant cymbal is one with a thin sound, little to no resonance and overall, very one-dimensional. Granted, it is a practical option but these defects make it difficult to see a variety of drummers using such a cymbal. It restricts the kinds of genres one can use such a cymbal for. The thin tonal quality would not suit various genres or kinds of drummers. Just various venues.

In a quick comparison to the Zildjian L80 cymbal, the actual low volume cymbal, we see a definite drop in overall levels, but not a change in tone. There is no compromise there as the whole idea was to create a low volume cymbal and that goal was achieved, with nothing else changed. Thus the idea of dropping frequency in a bid to drop volume seems misguided.

Final verdict: Buy it only if tone is not the guiding factor.■

SOUVIK CHAKRABORTY



THE FIRST AND CURIOUS FACTS OF INDIAN MUSIC

The all pervasive music of our lands have seemingly seeped in the cultures of the west like it had percolated from the archaic stilts of the temples and the altars to the tune of the folks. It is amazing that the music of our country is ever evolving in its own mix of regional spices and diasporic inferences. And, eventually we found ourselves in a heady mocktail of pop style indo hybrid, thanks to Bollywood! It is nothing but interesting to stop for a moment and look back in wonder-lust to the early days of this rich heritage that we can boast of today.

First Music School in India:

"Gandharva Mahavidyalaya" in Lahore is helmed to be the First Music School in India. Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar is said to have set it up on 5th May 1901. Panditji was an Indian classical musician from Maharashtra, Gandharva was set to be the ideal workshop for a talented mentor like him with loads of young talents to nurture. In September 1908 Panditji started a branch of the original Gandharva Mahavidyalaya. Post independence the music school from Lahore was shifted to Mumbai.

First Gramophone Record in India:

Thomas Edison invented the Phonograph in 1877, the phonograph by its core virtue was just a sound machine. But, when the Indian entrepreneur Hemendra Mohan Bose of Kolkata imported the Phonograph machine, he transformed it into one of the pioneering phenomenal ground breaking design innovation of the Indian musical scene. He made the first cylinder gramophone record and that is how in 1898 the first gramophone record took its birth in Kolkata. The records obviously bore the flagship label, Bose's Records. And in 1898 itself the Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd recorded the first Indian song at their Beliaghata factory in Kolkata.

First Hindi Rap Album

Inspired from the zeitgeist of the ghetto and the pulse of their emotions, the Indian musicians needed a sunshine a fresh gust of melody that will be different from the melodramatic music used in the popular cinema. Harjeet Singh Sehgal, popularly known as Baba Sehgal broke the market with his the first hindi rap album. "Thanda Thanda Pani" the rap anthem was actually a remake of "Ice Ice Baby" by Vanilla Ice. At that time the album had a whooping record sale of more than 30,000 copies.

First Indian to compose Symphony:

Illayaraja the succesful film music composer achieved this incredible feat. Indians have time and again outreached and overpowered themselves in most of the fields be it in arts, culture, sports or any other faculty. In July 1993 Illayaraja, the South Indian maverick actually composed a full length western classical symphony. The symphony was one hour and it took him at least 30 days to compose it. Illayaraja is also the first Asian whose symphony was performed by John Scott of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. This Orchestra is famous for been patronized by none other than Queen Elizabeth. It is only befitting for someone who has provided background music for about 800 Indian Films and about 4000 songs in different languages across various regions.

First Musician to receive Padma Bhushan Award:

MS Subbulakshmi, the Nightingale of India was the first musician to receive Padma Bhushan. It was hardly a matter of years when she received Padma Vibhushan Award in 1975 after the Padma Bhusan Award in the year 1954 and she was also the first musician to receive Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public service in 1974. She had been known for the enriching the heritage of the Carnatic Music of India. Along with Sharan Rani and Lata Mangeshkar form the trio - "Gems of India" a title conferred by the Government of India.■

VYOMA SHAH

The Indian Music Consumer

While India ranks 19th, when it comes to the largest music markets of the world, the Indian music industry is gradually approaching its prime and has the potential to be one of top ten music markets in the world. Data driven companies like Gracenote are working hard to help better understand the Indian music consumers' mindset and music consumption patterns. Proper utilization and analysis of this data can really help shape the industry and accelerate its growth.

Owing to the mobile phone proliferation, streaming has become increasingly prominent as a source of music consumption, so much so that it is the industry's leading cash cow. The Nielson India Music 360 report states that on an average, each online consumer spends 20 hours per week, listening to music. A majority of the streaming happens through music videos, 21.6% to be precise, followed by streaming through various different audio services. This explains why YouTube is the most popular streaming platform, followed by Jio Music and Google Play.

While the rate of streaming is exhibiting an upward curve, revenues are not rising proportionately. This is because piracy is still extremely rampant in our country, consumers are still hesitant to pay for this vast array of content. This explains why a streaming colossus like Apple Music, which is entirely a paid subscription service, is the least popular streaming platform in our country. What it might take to fix this imbalance between music consumption through streaming and revenue inflow, is a more vigilant approach towards detecting and closing piracy sites, which I know is harder said than done.

Cherie Hu, an award winning music writer said in one of her articles that outfitting streaming services with cleaner data might contribute towards bridging the gap as well, which is what Gracenote is aiming to do with its product – Gracenote Global Music Data. "We sell a normalized set of artist albums and recordings, i.e., for any individual entity, there is just one representation. Also, for the past fifteen years, we've been developing descriptive metadata – things like genre, mood, style, language etc., so that it makes it easier for our customers to create better user experiences," said Tom Rettig Vice President of Product, Music, Gracenote.

Despite digitization and exposure to a multitude of genres, the average Indian music consumer still prefers Bollywood over all other genres, followed by other Indian film music, Indian pop, Indian regional folk and then western pop music. However, with video streaming services becoming almost synonymous with the age old television, several possibilities open up for more artists hailing from the non-Bollywood world. Artist and composer Karan Malhotra has recently been composing a lot of music for various web series such as Girl in the City and the Trip. Indian shows like Sacred Games on Netflix are getting recognition for their music. If artists' original compositions and recorded music start finding a significant place in these shows, it would open a whole new world of opportunities. It would give them the level playing field they deserve and pave way to exploit the much underutilized power of sync rights in our country.

As far as live music is concerned, the report claimed that 47% prefer to watch live acts at intimate venues like bars and coffee shops. While the repercussions of the live music ban in a city like Bangalore, where music is such an integral part of the culture are daunting, there's still hope.

Our current and future economy seems extremely promising. According to the report, 86% of online consumers use a smartphone to consume music weekly and this number is only likely to grow. India will have the world's largest population by 2030, middle and high income classes will experience an increase in earnings and India will continue to be a young economy. Can't wait to see what the future will unravel for the Indian music industry. ■

PUNEET SAMTANI

PERSONALITY TRAITS OF A SUCCESSFUL STUDIO SOUND ENGINEER.

The job of a sound engineer can get really hard and taxing. It takes a lot of skill, determination, consistency, hard work and luck to succeed, like in most professional fields. To stand out in this highly competitive field a sound engineer needs more than skills towards his craft and more than the innumerable hours of work put behind him/her. The engineer needs to have some personal qualities to succeed as well.

1. Patience – Collaborating with creative people to create something which is personal to them can be very hard and demanding in itself. As an engineer you are not always going to like what the client has to say. It's the engineers job to manipulate the situation so every person involved is happy and the product ends up the way you had promised. The engineer must try to keep focus while the other creative people involved go through their emotions and frustrations regarding the product. She/he must stay patient and keep his cool always.

2. Strong work ethic – Getting to work in time, delivering the product as promised, keeping the clients in the loop, answering emails and calls timely, meeting deadlines, taking pride in one's work, being reliable, disciplined, meticulous, diligent all add up to the strong wok ethic one needs to excel.

3. Positive – More often than not, an artist is always in self doubt when creating. Staying positive and creating a positive atmosphere at the times when the artist is doubting oneself, can do wonders and lift the mood of the artist and everyone involved in the studio. At times when people are running against times to meet deadlines, it helps if the engineer remains positive.

4. Inquisitiveness and ability to adapt to new technology - There is so much happening around us and the technology is constantly changing. One must be inquisitive enough to understand where things are heading and one must be eager enough to adapt to new technologies coming their way. Things keep evolving and the engineer must also evolve with time to stay relevant.

5. Humble – There is always room to grow and learn. No one knows everything and probably never will. Keep that in mind. You are always a student of your art form. Take any art form, it usually takes a lifetime to master it.

6. Good Organizational skills - Have things set up for the session. Make sure everything needed is there. Keep the sessions edited, labeled and ready. Keep the place neat and tidy. It's the engineers job to make sure the session goes smooth and for this he/she has to be attentive and organized. The engineer has to manage the studios time and his own time very well so that the client does not overshoot the budget allocated.

7. Perceptive – Be totally in control and aware of your surrounding. Always think two steps ahead of the client and preempt situations. Pay attention to how everyone is feeling and give them an environment that allows them to be creative and do their job to the best of the abilities.

8. Good Social Skills – You must be able to work with people. If you don't have this you can surely develop it. You might be the best at what you do, but if you don't hone this skill you wont get very far.

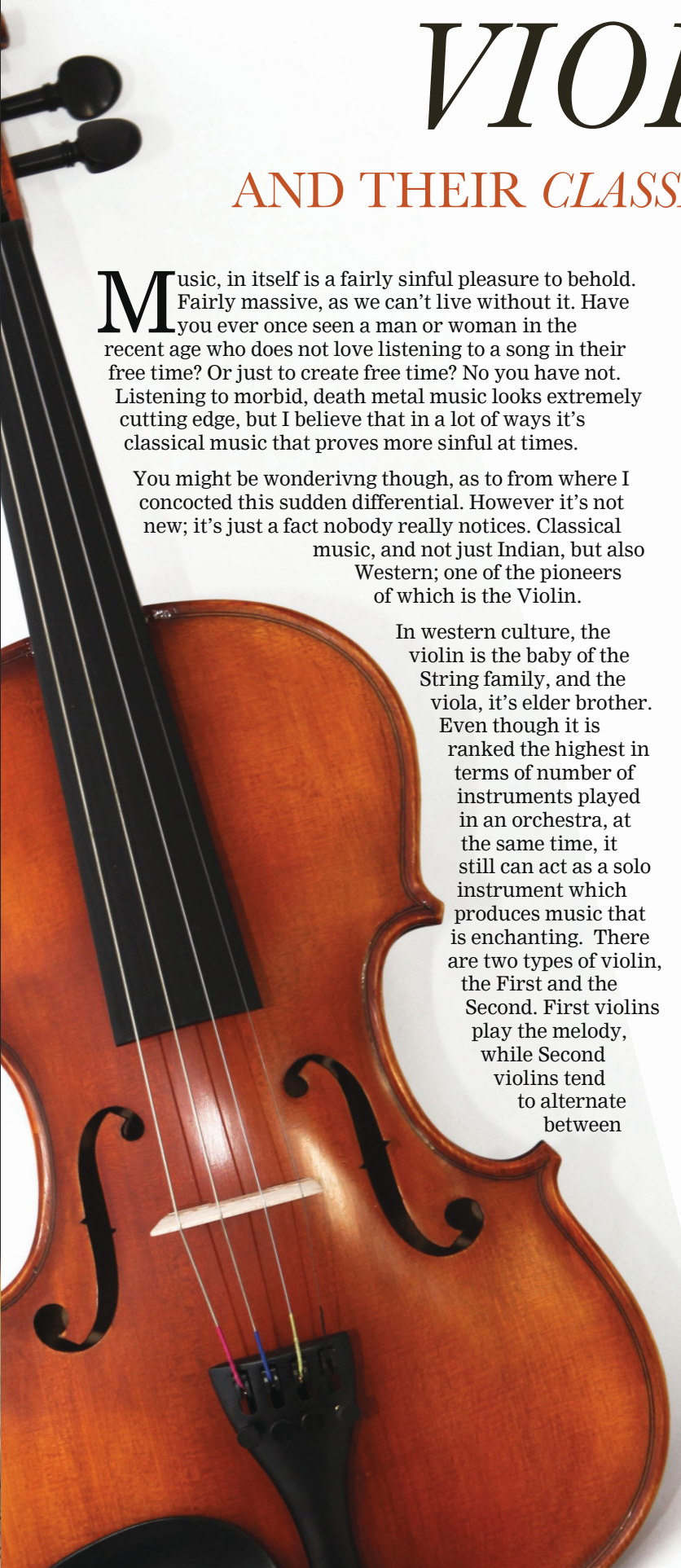
9. Talk less and Listen more – The engineer gets paid to listen and he must listen very carefully. Silence in the studio should always be maintained and the engineer should speak only when necessary.

10. Respect the artists and the creative – Not all the artists and the content that you work on will be of the same level or caliber. Keep in mind that you are a sound engineer and not a critic. Give utmost respect to your work. ■

ARITRO GHOSH

VIOLINS

AND THEIR *CLASSICAL* SINFULNESS



Music, in itself is a fairly sinful pleasure to behold. Fairly massive, as we can't live without it. Have you ever once seen a man or woman in the recent age who does not love listening to a song in their free time? Or just to create free time? No you have not. Listening to morbid, death metal music looks extremely cutting edge, but I believe that in a lot of ways it's classical music that proves more sinful at times.

You might be wonderivng though, as to from where I concocted this sudden differential. However it's not new; it's just a fact nobody really notices. Classical music, and not just Indian, but also Western; one of the pioneers of which is the Violin.

In western culture, the violin is the baby of the String family, and the viola, it's elder brother. Even though it is ranked the highest in terms of number of instruments played in an orchestra, at the same time, it still can act as a solo instrument which produces music that is enchanting. There are two types of violin, the First and the Second. First violins play the melody, while Second violins tend to alternate between melody and harmony; the magnificence of it all is witnessed on stage in a manner that may seem traditional, colorful, and sometimes even royal; but as you keep progressing into the depths of the tune, you almost feel hypnotized, like as if you're part of the music.

VIOLINS AND THE OPERA

Classical music, of all cultures, wins a lifetime achievement award, while performing an enchanting encore from the other side of the river of tunes, for this very reason. Opera is way above at the top when it comes to genres wherein the violin is used to create it's sinful magic. What a violin's tune essentially does differently when you add it's magic with the tireless A's and D's, is that it quickly restyles itself into something with a deeper level of understanding, with it's wide tonal quality; something with a backstory and a life. Something that contains sin.

The fact is, now, as the culture has slowly moved spaces; everyone is constantly in touch with these forms of music, and falling prey to the long hours of greatness.

VIOLIN CULTURE IN INDIA

If you're an exceptionally big violin fanatic, or even a big opera fanatic, you know what I am getting at. Now even India has embraced the culture that comes with the violin and it's bow. We have people from all round learning and playing it. Guitar is no more the primary instrument for the millennials in their pursuit towards the road of creativity. Young people form bands who not just play different genres of music, but merge, experiment and create more unique music. This makes way for instruments like the violin to make a strong entry into the field.

The violin with it's natural, suave tune bends into being part of so many different genres, and helps create so many brilliant songs. The solidity with which it has helped compose themes of different movies as well as beautiful boho music.

IN CONCLUSION

The violin's tune is so sinful exactly because of that; wherein it is able to channel the uniqueness of each song, and bring out all the feelings that lay within. That's why you'll see the idea of a person playing a violin so harshly in anger. You'll notice the deviousness when you realize that though he is playing so hard, the tune is so smooth. The chords of the violin mellows the darkness with it's tune, but pushes you into the veins of the player's emotions, or even your own. ■

HOW TO PREPARE

I get this question most often from my students and starters who wants to mix a song faster to deliver for their clients. Well, there is no way you can mix a song within 10 minutes! Well, a rough mix ? Yes, but not the Final mix. Always take time to analyse the song first and get what the singer is trying to convey on this song. Also talk to those who arranged the music and try to understand what they want and not what we want! We are just there to craft their song and polish their mixes so that its well received by the public audience. Most of sessions which comes from various DAW's are not well organised when we receive it for mixing. We cannot blame the programmer or the producer for this. We have to find a solution so that we can work efficiently during our entire mix session. Below are the tips which will help you to work faster on a mixing the project faster.

Prior to mixing, all the tracks should be edited and the clean up of unwanted sounds should be removed in your session. Insert your markers according to the song and keep them ready for the mix engineer and also get the tempo and meter from your programmer. This was it helps you to assign time based effects.

Preparing your DAW SessionTemplate

1. First identify the type of file ie. the audio resolution of the file wether its 44.1KHz or 48KHz and the bit rate is 24-bit or 16-bit. Now set your session to the same bit rate and resolution.

2. Have a template set in your DAW for the Drums, Bass, Guitars and name the tracks and keep it organised.

3. Now colour code the tracks so that larger track counts are visible for the eyes and easy to mix.

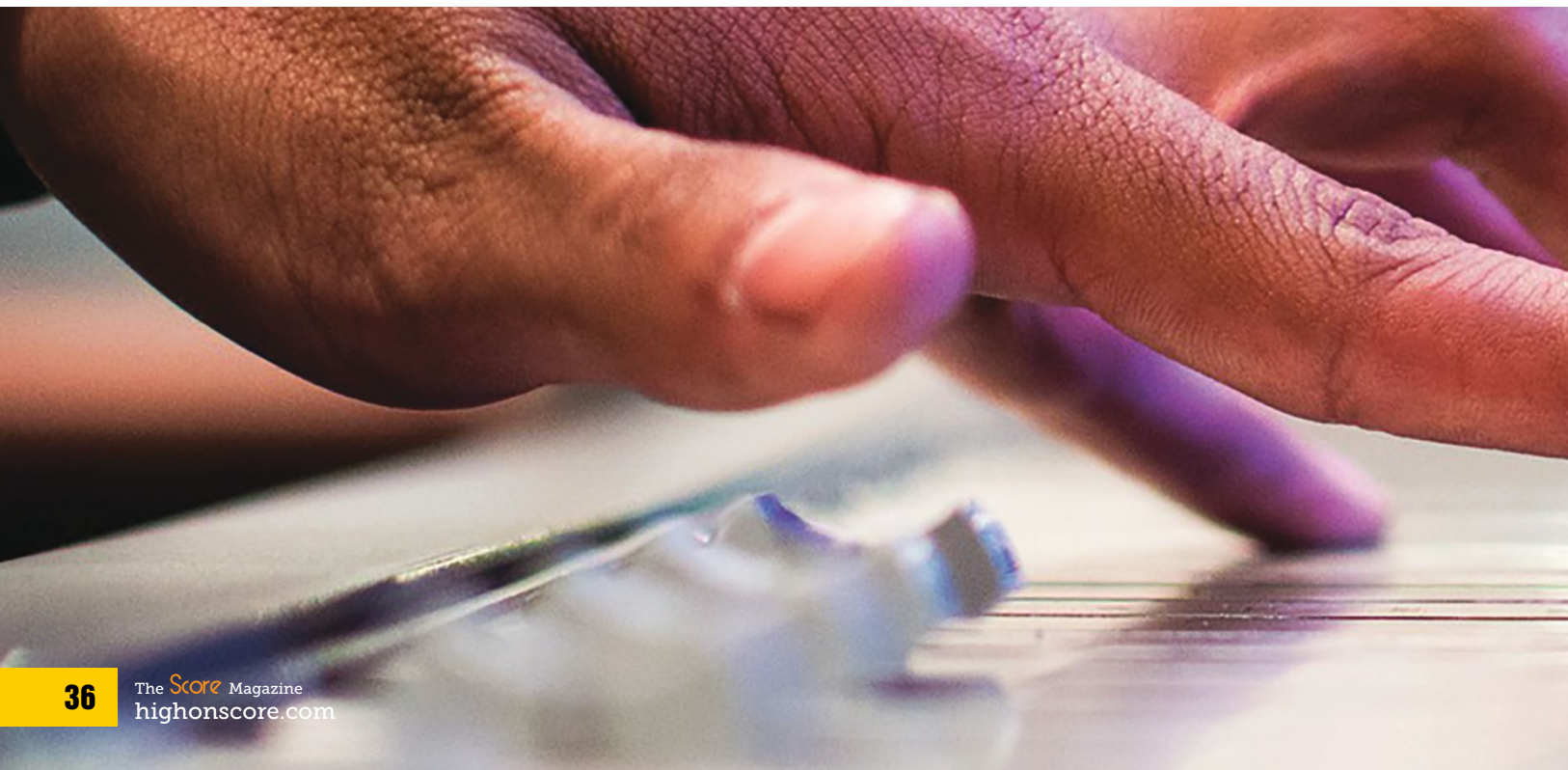
4. Set the High pass filter were ever needed. And also insert the Compressor were ever needed in your session.

5. Assign the Aux sends and returns for Effects buss and insert your favourite Reverb and Delay plugins in your buss.

6. Also create group buss for Vocals, Guitars, Drums, Synth and pads etc. This helps you to quickly adjust the overall levels in your final mix.

7. Keep your favourite Master chain of plugins ready and insert them into your Master buss Fader.

8. Also do insert your Peak Metering plugin in your Master Fader.



FOR MIXING

Key Points to rememember in MIXING

1. Insert your most favorite pluings for your vocal chain and keep them ready with your presets loaded, this way its too easy to recall your presets and work faster and do minor tweeking in your session. Again this depends on your source tracks. What i meant here is keep your tweeking minimum to speed up your mixing work so that much time is not wasted in tweeking each knob.

2. There might be drastic changes in your mix, but be aware of how it totally sounds in your overall mix.

3. Never audition too many times in the solo Mode. Always reference your tracks against the whole full tracks in your session. This will give you the correct sonic picture of your mix.

4. Try to hear your mix in a medium volume and also at the lower volume. Never mix always in the high volume. This way it seems that everything is heard nicely, but when you reduce the volume, certain tracks cant be heard!

5. Always mix in MONO! This is the golden rule of the thumb. It gives you that old style feel of hearing it in a small speaker or you can even assign your mix into a small blue tooth speaker and play from your DAW. This is the best shortcut method i use to reference my mix in a small speaker.

6. Well, what if your interface does not have a MONO button? No worries, use and stereo width plugin and turn it down to ZERO, so that all your trackssound in the center! Done!

7. Import all your session wav files into the appropriate tracks and you are good to go for the Mix!

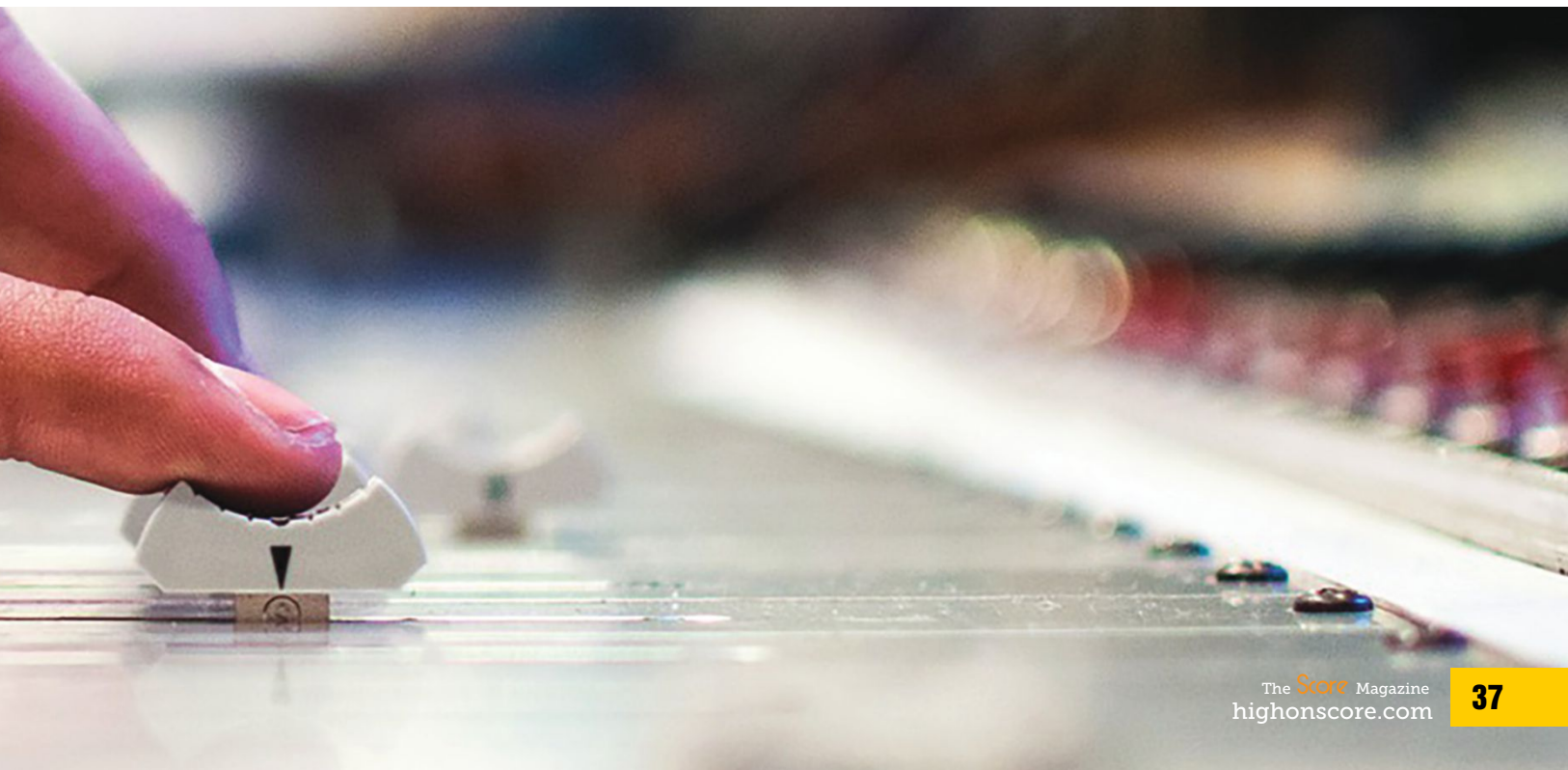
8. Never do the organizing work and immediately start on the mixing.

9. After doing all your cleanup work etc including the assignment of buss etc, then start your mixing work seperately and concentrate only on your levels and feel of the song.

Note: Most of the Grammy award engineers have their own assistant doing these jobs and also the rough balance is kind of done for them before even they step into the studio.!

Anyway, hope these points will help you to do a better mix. Happy mixing!

Author: Baba.L.Prasad. He is the owner and chief Sound/Mix and Mastering Engineer at Digi Sound Studio. He also teaches Sound Engineering and Music Production courses. For more details, visit www.digisoundacademy.com



PUNEET SAMTANI

Popular Stereo Microphone Techniques

The Need to record in Stereo

When our ears hear sound in stereo, the left and right ear take in auditory stimuli and then our brain locates the direction in which sound is coming from.

Recording in stereo makes the instrument sound fuller and rich, it gives it much more body than recording with one single microphone.

Recording in stereo replicates the natural way of listening to music.

Understanding Phase

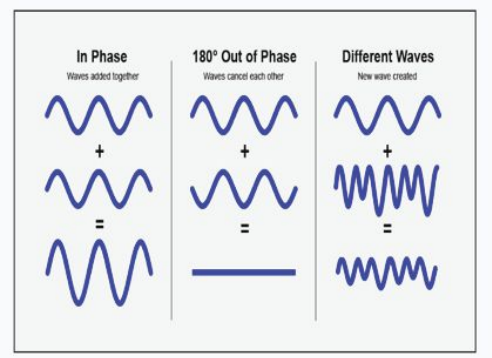


Image courtesy Rode Microphones
http://www.rode.com/blog/all/stereotechniques

When we talk about a particular time in our life, we refer to that time as a phase in our life!

Even in audio the term phase has to do with time. When we are recording the same instrument with two or more microphones, the same sound is going to arrive at different microphones at slightly different times. (within milliseconds of each other)

Audio signals either go into positive amplitudes or into negative amplitudes. If they are travelling in the same amplitude the frequencies will boost each other and if they are travelling in opposite amplitudes, they will cancel each other out.

Generally, the resulting audio has volume fluctuations and frequency boosting and cancellations. If the two signals are perfectly 180 degrees apart from each other then you will have complete silence.

While recording one must adjust the microphone placement in order to minimize phase issues.

One must try and flip the polarity switch. This basically inverts the waveform 180 degrees and makes the peaks the valleys and valleys the peaks. This can make a difference and solve phase issues.

Monitoring in mono can make you identify phase issues better. If the sound disappears, or becomes weak when the

output is mono, that's an indication that you need to make phase adjustments.

Different types of stereo microphone techniques.

There are over a dozen techniques to record an instrument in stereo. Let's look at a few of them which can make recordings creative and enjoyable for us.

You should be well versed with the different polar patterns of a microphone. If not please familiarize yourself for better understanding.

1. Spaced Pair (Also known as A-B pair)

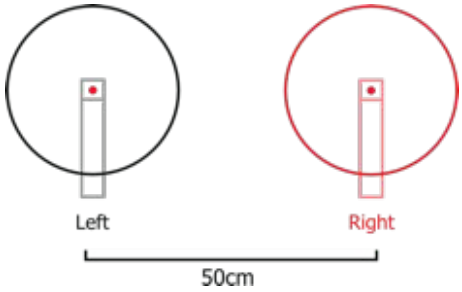


Image Courtesy - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stereophonic_sound

If you are looking for a wide stereo spread, one must try this configuration.

The microphones are ideally placed 50 cm apart from each other facing the sound source in the same direction. Having said that one must consider the size of the sound source being captured. This technique can face a lot of phase issues and to counter that one can follow the 3 :1 rule.

Place the second microphone 3 times as far as the first microphone from the sound source

If we are recording the guitar, and the first microphone is kept 10 meters away from the guitar the second microphone should be kept 10 meters away from the guitar but 30 meters apart from the first microphone.

The important factor here is centering and deciding what sits in the middle of the imaging. If you are recording drums, one would ideally keep the kick drum in the center.

You normally would use matched microphone pairs for this configuration.

2. X Y Technique (Also known as Coincident Pair)

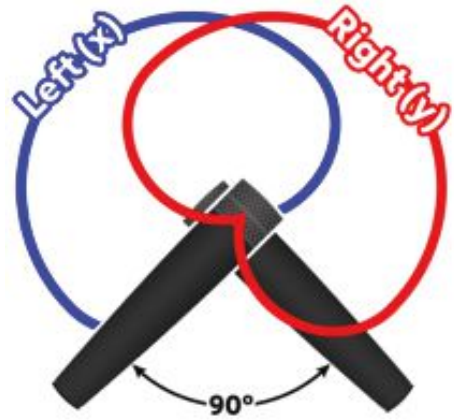


Image Courtesy – Sweetwater.com : https://goo.gl/images/ai5ZxM

If you are looking for the simplest way to record in stereo, this is probably the first configuration one would try. The microphones are positioned similar to how our ears hear an instrument.

Two cardioid microphones need to be positioned at right angles. The front of the capsules need to be aligned.

You do not need to be concerned regarding phase issues as much, because the capsules are positioned close to each other.

You can increase the angle of the microphones greater than 90 degrees if you want more width in sound. Keep in mind doing this would reduce the focus on the center.

3. Middle and Side Technique (Mid – Side or M/S technique)

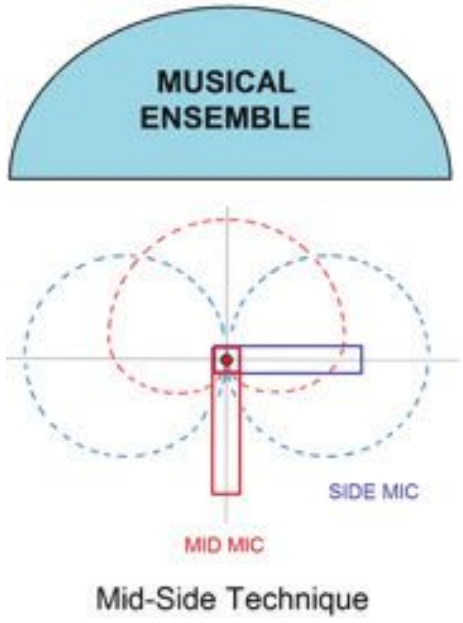


Image Courtesy – Los Senderos Studio : https://goo.gl/images/3ArN6k

This configuration gives you more control over the width of the stereo imaging than any other recording technique.

It allows you to make adjustment even in the post production process. This makes it a popular one.

You often use two completely different microphones and don't need to opt for a matched pair.

Typically, a cardioid/ hypercardiod microphone is placed in the center of the sound source.

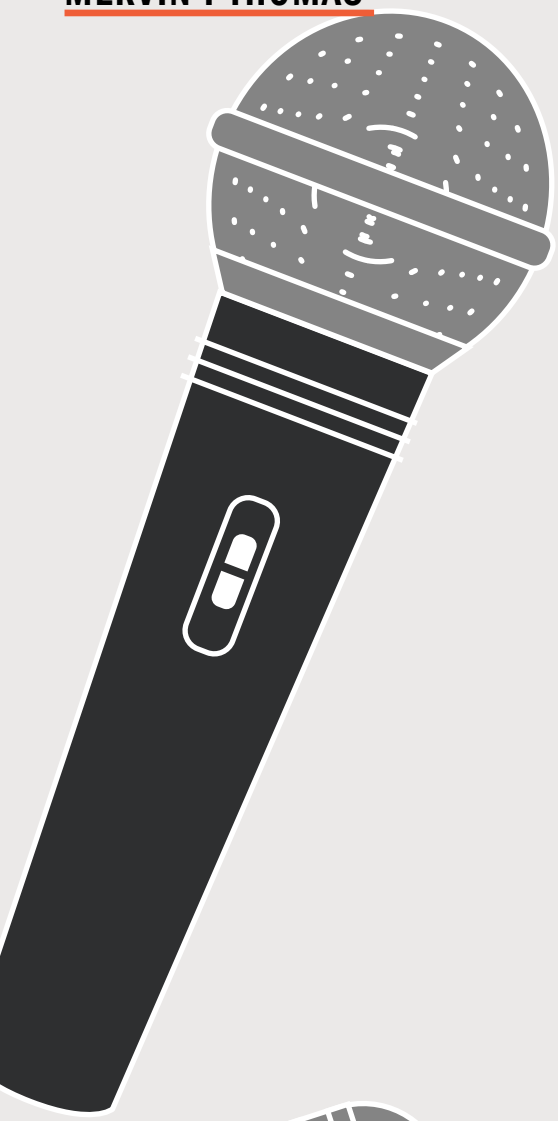
The Side Microphone must be a figure of 8 microphone and must be 90 degrees off axis from the sound source.

Both microphones are kept one above the other and and as close as possible.

The mid microphone acts as a center of the channel while the side channel picks up information (ambient and reverberation sound) coming from the sides of the sound stage.

You can start by trying out the above essential techniques and if recording in stereo does excite you there are some more techniques we can learn in the time to come!

MERVIN T THOMAS



Choosing your Microphone? – Home Studio

Almost every Home Studio enthusiast will run into the dilemma of choosing a Microphone, whether it is to record or to buy. A microphone works pretty much like our ear. There is no fixed standard, meaning; there is no good or bad microphone. This is because of the various factors that influence the sound while recording.

Choosing a Mic in the Studio :

Some of the main factors include the room, the artist, frequency response of the mic, polar pattern (directional response) and size of the diaphragm. Every brand or type of microphone has different characteristics. I would like to list out some of the main factors.

- The Artist: A good artist is the first key to a great recording. In the case of a singer, one needs to understand the timbre of his/her voice. If time permits, setup at least three microphones before the session. Allow the singer to try out all the mics and then pick the Mic that is sonically pleasing to you.

- The Room: A noisy room or a studio close to heavy traffic is a boon to recording artists. This is the sole reason why artists and engineers spend on their Room Isolation and Acoustics. But not everyone can afford Sound-proofing or Acoustic treatments. In this scenario, the best way is to find the quietest spot in your room. Avoid using a condenser microphone. Some of them are too sensitive that you can hear your neighbor talking. Understand the polar pattern of the microphone, use its directional character and point it directly at the source. Also, understand the rejection points on the polar pattern of the microphone. This will help you position the mic in the best possible way. The polar pattern of the microphone is always mentioned on its box or you can check it on the website.

- Frequency Response: Frequency response of a microphone is defined as the way a microphone responds or reacts or hears different frequencies. Different microphones have different frequency responses. From a generic perspective, Condenser mics have an pleasing frequency response overall. Dynamic microphones comparatively have a lower frequency response than a condenser. A ribbon microphone is very sensitive and has the highest frequency response, meaning, it responds

very well to higher frequencies. In this case, one can use a ribbon microphone on thin husky vocals. But these things change with respect to various factors as mentioned earlier.

Verdict: Understand that the Microphone responds like a ear and understand the type of source. If possible, experiment with different options. I have known big artists who use cheap chinese microphones as it sounds really good on their voice.

Choosing a Mic to buy:

There are tons of options in the market in terms of purchasing a Microphone. Every brand or seller out there is trying to bring out something unique in terms of build, quality, sound etc. How do you know which one to buy? The best way to decide is to understand what you are going to be doing. Moreover, factors like your recording environment, source and budget also contributes to your decision.

- What are you going to track ?

Understanding the main usage of the Microphone will definitely make it easy for you to choose your Microphone. If your primary source is just a voice, then there is no point in buying an SM57 just because the dealer says it is the best snare mic. If you are going to be doing a bunch of things, then go for a microphone that is versatile. For example, an SM7b can be used on Vocals, Guitar Cabinets, Voice-overs etc. If possible drop by a friends studio and try out some of his Microphones.

- Recording Environment:

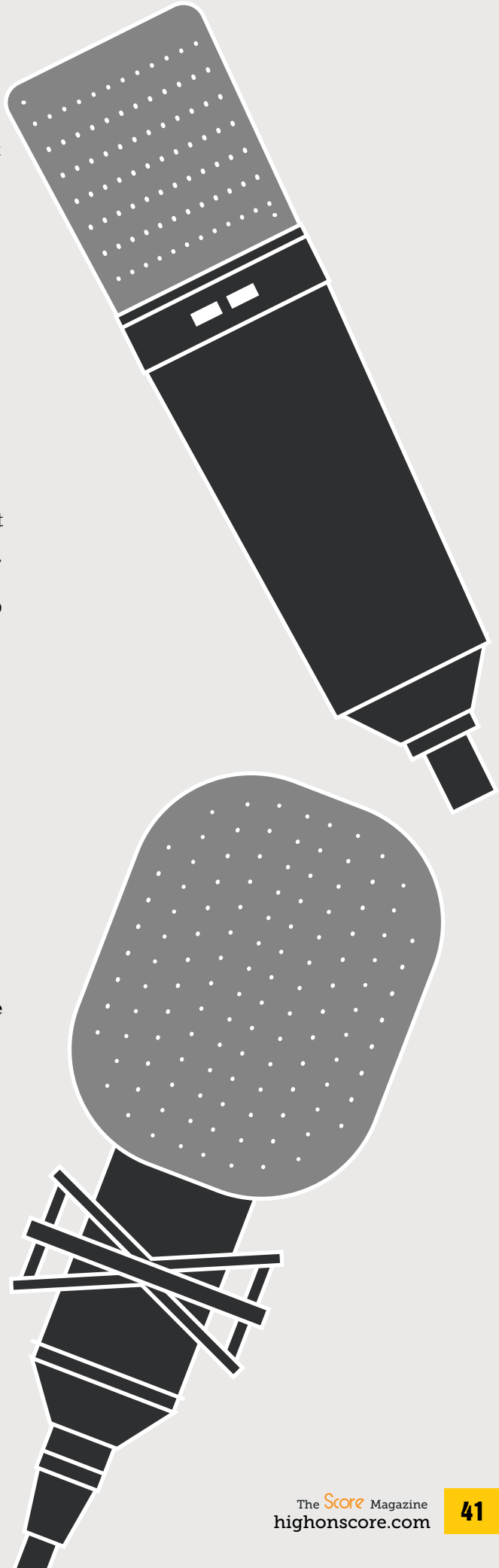
As discussed before, your recording environment is a major factor that you need to be worried about. If your studio is in a noisy neighborhood, then a condenser microphone is going pick all of that into your recording. A dynamic microphone would be a better option here as it is very directional (Cardioid Polar Pattern). One can use natural absorbers like curtains and book shelfs that act as natural acoustic treatment. Though they don't do much, filling the room with the usual stuff make the room sound little better.

- Budget:

This is a big concern for many artists. But the good news is that, there are really good microphones that fits almost any budget. Don't let budget affect your art, but, yes, it is true that you get what you pay for. There are various mics that start from a lower budget. Some of them are given below,

- Shure SM58
- Audio Technica AT2020
- Aston Origin
- Rode NT1A
- Shure SM7b
- Blue Bluebird
- Aston Spirit
- Warm Audio WA47jr.

Verdict: The best way to buy a Microphone is to keep the above-mentioned factors in mind and do some research. There are tons of data on the Internet. As already mentioned, if a microphone is helping you achieve what you want, then you got it. And most importantly, feel free to experiment.



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SL MkIII is the centerpiece that can be used to control your whole studio, working perfectly alongside your DAW. Make working with your hardware easy and creatively rewarding, and construct your next production in the eight track polyphonic sequencer, with everything staying in sync.

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LED Feedback

Work with scales and keys and set up multiple zones and layers on the keyboard. See everything instantly with vibrant on-key RGB LED feedback.

Comprehensive connectivity

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ROLAND UNVEILS

AX-EDGE KEYTAR

Step Into the Spotlight with a Unique Mobile Performance Synth Featuring Pro Sounds, Customizable Looks, and More

Roland unveils the AX-Edge Keytar, a performance synthesizer designed to be played in a standing position with a shoulder strap. Building on decades of refinement and input from artists around the world, the AX-Edge features 49 full-sized keys and a professional sound set crafted specifically for keytarists. It also offers a sleek, modern design with the unique ability to interchange Edge Blades and customize the instrument's look. Compact and battery operated, the AX-Edge is a powerful mobile instrument that enables performing keyboardists to take center stage and put their music in the spotlight.

The AX-Edge delivers a striking presence that makes any live player stand out. Models are available in black or white finishes, and the black model features an all-black keyboard for a dark, sophisticated appearance. Each AX-Edge model comes with an extra Edge Blade in the box (a silver Edge Blade for the black model and a gold Edge Blade for the white), allowing the player to create a fresh look that complements their personal performance style.

Inside the AX-Edge is a carefully curated sound set driven by Roland's latest sound technologies. Optimized for stage performance, the sounds are designed to cut through even in loud bands. Dedicated buttons provide instant access to edgy leads, fat basses, and all types of sounds perfect for the performing keytarist, whether it's taking solos or sharing the limelight with bandmates.

Users can customize sounds by wirelessly connecting to the AX-Edge editor app with Bluetooth MIDI. Splits and layers take full advantage of the expansive, full-sized keyboard, and there's wealth of stunning effects that provide polished, studio-quality tone in any venue. And thanks to the Tone Remain function, players can switch sounds seamlessly without notes or effect tails being cut off prematurely.

With its highly intuitive neck controls, the AX-Edge offers maximum expression for taking performances to new levels. There's a modulation bar and pressure-sensitive pitch ribbon, easy-to-reach portamento, hold, octave, and program change buttons, and an array of assignable controls that can be tailored to any performance style.

Gigging keyboard players need to cover lots of different sounds and parts, and often have to function as the backbone of the entire act. The AX-Edge is filled with thoughtful stage features, including an innovative dual display system, arpeggiator, and onboard song player for handling backing duties. There's even a built-in vocoder, which can be layered with internal sounds to create unique backing vocals or funky, retro lead parts.

When powered with rechargeable Ni-MH batteries, the AX-Edge provides up to four full hours of mobile playing time. The instrument can also be powered via an AC adaptor.

To learn more about the AX-Edge Keytar, visit Roland.co.in.

SENNHEISER

XS WIRELESS 1 DUAL

Sennheiser's XS Wireless 1 DUAL is the perfect solution for everyone who loves to sing or aims to be extremely efficient with their presentations. It is a 2-channel wireless system for singers and presenters which has been designed keeping in mind the simplicity and ease of use. These analogue UHF systems feature a sleek dual-channel receiver with built-in antennas and the streamlined interface from Sennheiser's already loved XS Wireless 1 series.

The XS Wireless 1 DUAL offers its audience the perfect blend of impactful sound, a memorable experience and easy on the pocket. The new XS Wireless DUAL Sets offer excellent live sound, a stunning design and incredible ease of use. It has especially been created for users like weekend DJs, schools, houses of worship and hospitality venues who truly value powerful sound, but also have a budget on their mind. The EM-XSW 1 DUAL two-channel receiver features automatic frequency management with one-touch synchronization, antenna switching diversity for reliable reception and intuitive, icon-based controls. The EM-XSW 1 DUAL two-channel receiver is very compelling to users that would prefer to work with two mics and require a neat, one-unit set-up.

With its XS Wireless 1 DUAL, Sennheiser has expanded its XS Wireless 1 series. The receiver is available separately or as part of two XSW 1 DUAL Sets that combine it with two wireless microphones using either the e 825 or e 835 capsule.

More often than not, while trying to increase the sound impact, the consumer wishes to use more than one mic. While the sound does improve, it leads to a cumbersome set-up. The XS Wireless 1 DUAL has a solution for all of that. It is ideal for everyone who wishes to work with more than one mic, while continuing to give them a hassle-free, one-unit set up. Like other systems in the XS Wireless 1 series, the DUAL sets offer fast set-up straightforward user operation and great sound.

Each receiver has up to ten compatible, preset channels in eight frequency banks, and provides balanced XLR and unbalanced jack outputs.

The EM-XSW 1 DUAL two-channel receiver is an ideal fit for users that prefer to work with two mics and require a neat, one-unit set-up.

Highlights of the key features:

• Excellent live sound featuring Sennheiser's renowned evolution microphone capsules

• Antenna-switching 2-channel diversity reception

• Integrated antennas

• Automatic frequency management and synchronization via remote channel for easy setup

• Selectable UHF frequencies within a large bandwidth

• Up to 10 compatible channels

Tic Tac Toe goes beyond fun and games with an avant-garde sound system from Bose Professional

Tic Tac Toe's characteristic laid-back lounge feel ironically exudes a happy vibe of liveliness.

Before all else though – Music is what keeps the night young for all; and the music at Tic Tac Toe aims to cover as much of the spectrum as it possibly can through an opportune programming schedule that witnesses non-intrusive lounge music during the day, which progresses into groovy electronic vibes as the night moves on. The unsung hero behind the amazing music experience here is the exceptional aural reinforcement which heightens the music playback throughout the venue – delivered through a top-notch pro audio architecture from global pro audio leaders, Bose Professional.

Integrated by Indore based solutions company Audiocratz Sound & Light Solutions with astute design inputs from Bose Professional's technical team lead by Navin Dutta, the audio system at Tic Tac Toe comprises a meticulously planned loudspeaker scheme featuring the use of avant-garde products like the ever efficient Bose LT9403 install specific loudspeakers paired with the powerful and impact heavy Bose SM118 subwoofers deployed at the main dancefloor area, along with multiple numbers of the RMU105 loudspeakers from the acclaimed RoomMatch series distributed evenly at the private dining room and along the perimeters and common areas of the venue. The loudspeaker setup has been designed keeping in mind the physical attributes and dimensions of the space which mainly entails little to no acoustic treatment and a rather high ceiling, making it quite the challenge to work around. The loudspeakers used in the setup provide for just the perfect amount of dispersion which ensures that e very last inch of Tic Tac Toe experiences nothing less than the very best of Bose Professional's signature sound, consistently. The entire loudspeaker set up is powered through a fortified amplification system comprising the ever-so-powerful PM8500 power amplifiers from Bose Professional's PowerMatch series of products.

A member of the management at Tic Tac Toe shares their views about the audio experience, saying "We pride ourselves for the high standards of quality in every aspect of service, and there's absolutely no doubt that our new audio system from Bose Professional is an absolutely crucial aspect of it all. The system is simply fabulous. The speakers accurately reproduce all kinds of music with great ease; and has enough room to deliver a louder and more impactful audio performance whenever needed. Not only are we extremely pleased with the quality of sound, but also the system's ease of use and low-maintenance. And what's even more heartening is the fact that several patrons have complimented us on the great quality of sound here! The Audiocratz Sound & Light Solutions team have done a great job, and we appreciate all the work, effort and dedication they've put into making Tic Tac Toe a dining destination that sounds every bit as great as it looks!"

Vibhor Khanna, Division Manager – India, Bose Professional, comments "When you visit Tic Tac Toe, you'll instantly recognize that the venue prides itself on delivering only the finest quality to their patrons – be the food and beverage or any other aspect of the service experience. This was what the client insisted from the get-go and it is so heartening to see everything come to fruition just the way it was envisioned. The client's decision to partner with Bose Professional exemplifies their knowledge and awareness of how great quality sound enhances the dining experience; and consolidates their commitment to offering nothing less than the best to their patrons. It's been an honour and a privilege for us to be a part of this project and we commend Mr Vinayak Luthra and his team at Audiocratz Sound & Light Solutions for a great job done with the audio solution at the venue. It's great to know that Tic Tac Toe have achieved the kind of high quality world class sound

Vibhor Khanna,
Country Manager - SAARC

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Casio India launches 4 new CT-X Series keyboards with new AiX Sound Source

Casio India Co. Pvt. Ltd, a leading manufacturer of electronic musical instruments, has launched its brand-new CT-X series of portable keyboards.

The new CT-X8000IN, CT-X9000IN & CT-X870IN have been specially designed for India with a lot of regional feedback taken into account while developing this keyboards to fulfil India specific requirements.

- Indian Folk & Regional Keyboard players using the keyboard for performances in Bhajans, Festival performances, Bollywood/Entertainment Performances.

- Academic learning in schools & institutions, musical examinations.

- Keyboard players looking for western tones & performance oriented keyboards.

All models feature the new AiX Sound Source*1 leveraging expertise that Casio accumulated in developing sound sources for its digital pianos. The AiX Sound Source allows the CT-X keyboards to faithfully reproduce the appealing sound of acoustic instruments such as guitars, drums, basses, brass, wind instruments, string ensembles and more. Also, The economical pricing of the CT-X series is bound to help high grade students and performers, in making the right keyboards for their needs affordable.

Main Features of the CT-X9000IN and CT-X8000IN

• The user can customize tones to taste using 100 DSP effects that combine various algorithms, three system effects (reverb, chorus, and delay) and 10 equalizer presets.

• Wide Range of Tones and Rhythm Patterns (800 tones and 250 rhythms) Supports application from composition, to arranging, to live performance. **The keyboards contain 43 Indian Tones and 39 Indian Rhythms for regional musical applications.**

• Registration Function for Instant Recall of Performance Setups. The Registration function enables the user to save up to 128 keyboard setups including tones and rhythms. The user can instantly switch between complex playing patterns and tone/rhythm setups without configuring them every time, enabling versatile and seamless performance.

• The keyboards provide a variety of features for composing and arranging. The Phrase Recorder allows users to record a musical phrase that can be instantly triggered using any of the four pads. The mixer can handle 42 different parts and the 17-track MIDI sequencer can save up to 10 original songs.

• An assignable jack can be used with either a footswitch or expression pedal. Also provided are an audio input jack for connecting external audio equipment, and a class-compliant USB port for connecting to a computer. An additional USB port supports memory devices to easily save and load data created on the CT-X9000IN/X8000IN.

• Expanded Registration function and four phrase pads, together with direct access buttons for Tap Tempo, Transpose, and Octave switching making the keyboards suitable for stage and live performances, as well as music schools and music classrooms.

Main Features of the CT-X870IN and CT-X700

• Wide Range of Tones and Rhythm Patterns (600 tones and 195 rhythms) supports applications from composition, to arranging, to live performance. The keyboards contain 21 Indian Tones and 26 Indian Rhythms for regional musical applications.

• Registration Function for Instant Recall of Performance Setups. The Registration function enables the user to save up to 32 keyboard setups including tones and rhythms. The user can instantly switch between complex playing patterns and tone/rhythm setups without configuring them every time, enabling versatile and seamless performance.

• The CT-X870IN/X700 keyboards provide a port for a sustain pedal, an audio input jack for connecting external audio equipment, and a USB port for connecting to a computer. In addition, the CT-X870IN features an additional USB port which supports memory devices, plus a Pitch Bend Wheel for recreating various instrument gestures. The keyboards also come with a 6-track MIDI sequencer with room for up to five original songs.

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MUKESH AMARAN

ALBUM ARTicle: MIHIR RANGANATHAN

Mihir Ranganathan is our album art artist of this month. Another example of how intertwining music and exposure to arts from a very young age could set you free and make you a little bit more liberal. Having gotten into arts, trying to imitate his father and by watching tons of cartoons, Mihir first ended up as an arts guy in an advertising industry. Mihir credits this phase to having helped him view art in a commercial way as well. A crucial takeaway for many artists of today who miss out on creation due to the lack of knowledge about the commercials.

Like a lot of us enthusiast, Mihir explains that the music was always a backbone to his creation, throughout his life. A constant background score, a theme to his life. "The music is different with the ups and downs of course. What I listened to in college and after, helped shape the person I am. The music I listen to definitely influences my art. For example, how can you look at the cover art of Iron Maiden's 'Killers' and not feel inspired?", he says with passion. Although Mihir got to the guitar at a later point in life, he is one half of the acoustic duo called "Duality" alongside Manoj Sreekumar.

Post his initiation to album arts through Skrat's Bison, Mihir had felt comfortable to take on Madrascals. " The process itself was quite smooth. I think Amrit Rao quite liked the dark yet cartoony-not-comical style I had used on 'Bison' and believed I could pull off something that was overall dark yet tongue-in-cheek. The cover art is filled with situations and scenes that appear across the album. The Album has a larger theme with each song forming a piece of the conceptual puzzle.", says Mihir. A key ingredient in the process of concocting this piece was the discussion about the lyrics with the band and the freedom provided by Amrit and the band to interpret them to fit the style.

As like any other field of creation, a lot of study and hard work is spent creating a piece that translates someone else's art to the closest form. Mihir is one such dedicated individual who connects with it emotionally on multiple levels. If you think it can never be a great piece of art, see for yourselves.■

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MUKESH AMARAN

Gig Calendar
OCTOBER 2018

DELHI

Oct 6th	Pakshee	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi
Oct 9th	Eshaan & Priyana	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi
Oct 15th	Wesley & Archit	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi
Oct 18th	Indigo Children - Thursday Live!	Hard Rock Café, New Delhi
Oct 20th	The Revisit Project	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi
Oct 26th	The Iyer Project - Album Launch - Thursday	Hard Rock Café, New Delhi
Oct 30th	Zyakuni In My Backyard	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi

MUMBAI

Oct 5th	RnB, Funk & Pop Night with Azamaan and Friends	The Quarter, Mumbai
Oct 10th	Folk Night with Clayton and Aria	The Quarter, Mumbai
Oct 11th	Ta Dhom Project, A Classical Hip Hop Night	The Quarter, Mumbai
Oct 11th	TrapHouse Deli - Dee MC, Black Turban Squad, Gravity, DJ BLUnt	The Habitat, Mumbai
Oct 17th	All Blues - A tribute to Miles Davis by the Anurag Naidu	The Quarter, Mumbai
Oct 25th	Aankh Micholi - Thursday Live!	Hard Rock Café, Andheri

GURUGRAM

Oct 13th	SNS Live: Bolly Jazz	Saints N Sinners, Gurugram
Oct 14th	Dhruv Sharma	Saints N Sinners, Gurugram
Oct 17th	Reggae Night with Woody Accouche Project	Saints N Sinners, Gurugram
Oct 18th	Moongphali - Thursday Live!	Hard Rock Café, Gurgaon
Oct 25th	SNS Live: Lost Radio Duo	Saints N Sinners, Gurugram
Oct 27th	Saturday Night Live feat. Bismil	Hard Rock Café, Gurgaon
Oct 27th	SNS Live: Crooner's Collective	Saints N Sinners, Gurugram

BENGALURU

Oct 5th	Fandom presents Swarathma // Raah E Fakira Album Launch	Fandom, Bangalore
Oct 7th	The Derelicts + Superpolite	Fandom, Bangalore
Oct 11th	Fernandes Fusion - Thursday Live!	Hard Rock Café, Bangalore
Oct 14th	Bourbon Session - Sunday Unplugged!	Hard Rock Café, Bangalore
Oct 25th	Underground Authority - Thursday Live!	Hard Rock Café, Bangalore

PUNE

Oct 11th	The Stellar - Thursday Live!	Hard Rock Café, Pune

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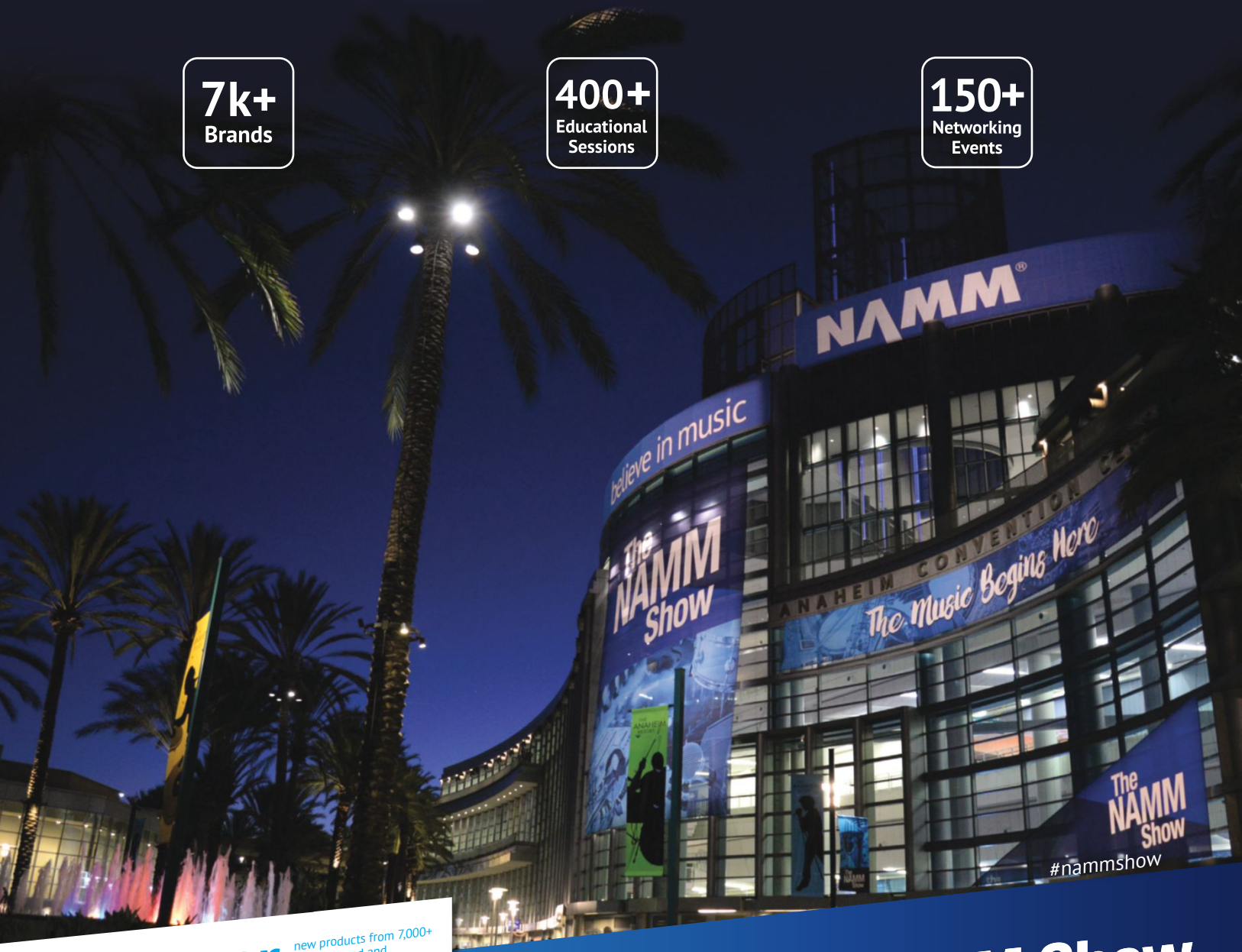

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